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Floating to Fortune; Or, Which was the Hero?

By JAMES REYNOLDS.

CHAPTER XIX.

HYSTERICS.

RICHARD PRICE, Jr., upon the departure of the coachman, sat for many minutes in his chair immovable, and apparently in what is called a "brown study."

"What strange things have happened," he at last said, as he folded his hands together, "to a whole regiment of men and women, boys and girls, since that foggy night, a dozen or so weeks ago, when, out of sheer fun, I took from under his very nose, and while he was searching for it, the governor's umbrella! Now, what has happened since then to lots of folks came through that umbrella. If I hadn't had the parachute in my hand, and with it met Tom Burt and his adopted sister, he would have, in all probability, kept her on this side the river, and then he wouldn't have gone overboard, worked his way in the queer fashion he has to Central America, fallen into an estate, and made a hero of himself. And I—well, anybody, under such circumstances, would have stretched forth a hand and saved, from going into the river with Tom, Alice St. John."

Dick paused in his soliloquy for a moment, and then resuming it, said:

"Well, everybody ain't cut out by nature for a hero. I never would make anything but a lawyer, if I were to live a thousand years; while Tom Burt assumes the part as quietly and stoically as if he were born to it. I do believe there are those who are born to a stirring life, while others sit in their closets the day long, and waste their hours thinking and grubbing. But sometimes the grubbers are remembered when the heroes are forgotten! Well, I won't complain. We each have our part cast for us in the drama of life, and if we but do it well we are sure of our meed of applause. 'We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep.' That's what Shakspeare says; and how true it is! But, hello, Dick Price," he exclaimed, suddenly springing to his feet, in his impetuosity knocking over the heavy armchair in which he had been seated. "What's the matter with you? Are you getting to be a dreamer, eh? I thought you were made of sterner stuff. Come, sir, to work! You must even play postman, and bear glad tidings of great joy, indeed, to a mother's heart. I work no more to-day as a grubber. Would I were a hero!"

Putting on his coat, and on arranging his desk and carefully locking the great safe, he passed out of the building into the street.

A few steps, hurriedly taken to escape the throng of pedestrians who, from sunrise until long past its setting, crowd the narrow sidewalks of Nassau Street, and he reached Fulton Street.

There, to his surprise, as he moved along with a more leisurely step, a hand was placed gently upon his left shoulder. And as the hand touched him a low but very sweet voice exclaimed:

"Why, Sir Price, are you on this way passing?"

Dick didn't look around, nor even hasten or slacken his pace, as he answered.

"Because, miss, I'm a knight-errant. I'm on my way to a lady's bower. It's in Brooklyn."

"Oh, Dick!" the voice cried. "Well, there! I always knew you were a wretch. I'd wager you a pair of gloves that you are going straight to Mrs. St. John's house."

Dick bowed an assent.

"And I'll risk another pair of gloves that you have been caught, like a rat in a trap, by the eyes of her pretty daughter, Alice."

Dick blushed.

"Well, I declare!" said the voice, "if men aren't the biggest fools—especially very young men!"

"What are those fellows, then, who are constantl yringing the door-bell of the house, and for whom you sing yourself hoarse, knocking that piano to pieces, eh?"

"Oh," with a little quaver of the voice, "they're gentlemen visitors, that's all."

"Well, I'm going on a gentleman visit straight to Mrs. St. John. I've a letter for her from her adopted son, Tom Burt. If I were to put it in that lamp-post box, redirected, she would get it some time to-morrow, and I prefer that she should have it to-night."

"From Tom Burt!" said the voice, delightedly. "Oh, I'm so glad! And he isn't dead?"

"Why, no, you little goose. If he were, how could he write this letter," and Dick pulled it from its resting-place, "unless his spirit controlled a medium to do it for him?"

"I say, brother Dick," said the voice, in a wheedling tone.

"Now it's coming," the junior muttered. "See here, Mattie, I shan't do it. I'm poor as Job's turkey."

"Is pa in the office?"

"He is, miss. And if you'll take my advice you won't go near him. He lectured me to-day on my strange speech, as he called it."

"Well, Dick, do let me

"'BETRAYED, BY ALL THAT'S DAMNABLE!' GROUND FROM BETWEEN THE TEETH OF HENRY BURT, WHO HAD, FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON, BECOME SUSPICIOUS OF THE NEGRO, AND HAD WATCHED HIS EVERY MOVEMENT WITH SEARCHING, RESOLUTE EYES."

have five dollars. I know you've got it. I saw you have it at breakfast this morning. I want it for an especial purpose. I'll pay it back to you some time, upon my honor."

Dick groaned.

"It's highway robbery!" he exclaimed; "and I've a mind to have you arrested. Why don't you point your parasol at me and say, in a melodramatic voice, 'Stand and deliver'!"

Without another word he handed his pocketbook to the robber, who unhesitatingly opened it, and with her dainty fingers, daintily gloved, drew from one of the recesses thereof the five-dollar bill her eyes had seen and coveted hours before.

With a mischievous smile playing about her pretty mouth, and peeping out of her dark, full eyes, the young lady said, as she placed the bill in her portemonnaie:

"Thank you, Dick; you're a good fellow, and see if I don't remember you in my will."

Saying this, she waved her disengaged hand and tripped away in the direction of Broadway, presently overtaking a young lady of about her own years and complexion, but decidedly handsomer.

To this young woman Mattie Price said, with a little laugh of triumph:

"I've just committed highway robbery, Alice. I met brother Dick—didn't you notice him?—and I made him hand over his pocketbook, and I rifled it of its most valuable contents—a five-dollar bank note. You see, I was out of money."

"How could you do so?" asked Miss St. John, with a show of surprise.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Mattie. "Pray, what's the value of a brother unless you can use him? He's a dear, good fellow, Alice. I'm proud of him."

Miss St. John made no reply.

A faint blush, however, which may not have been noticed by her companion, suffused her neck and face.

As for the junior, his face lengthened as his sister hurried from him, and putting his hands in his trowsers pockets, walked slowly toward the East River. His mind seemed to be deeply engaged in the solution of a problem.

"There's no use," he at length said, but in a scarcely audible tone. "It always was so, and I suppose always will be so. Why, as far back as I can remember that girl'd take my things and keep them and use them as it pleased her. If I had an apple, and she thought it nicer-looking or nicer eating than her own, she would just say, 'Brother Dick, give me that apple, please,' and, of course, I had to surrender. I couldn't help myself. I was born to be her convenience, or else she came into the world for the express purpose of invading my personal rights and depriving me of my loose change."

Had the junior been aware in whose society his sister was while he was thus grumbling, and that his five dollars would in part be squandered for her delectation in ice-creams and admissions to Wallack's theatre, he was very generous with her brother's money, as most sisters are, perhaps—he would not have objected to the loss of another little sum of money—provided it went in the same direction.

Dick, however, lost no time.

He hastened, on landing on the Brooklyn shore, to the residence of Mrs. St. John.

The lady was at home, and received him with her usual cordial welcome, without delay.

"Alice is not at home," she said; "you ought to have met them on the way. Your sister and my daughter have gone to New York—to a matinée."

Richard Price, Jr., was certainly disappointed; but he did not show it.

"Why, Mrs. St. John, I met my sister in Fulton Street, near Nassau. She was then, apparently, alone. I'm sure I met her," he added, with a grim smile, "because she made me hand over my wallet—it was a clear case of stand and deliver, madame—and I then and there emptied it of its most valuable papers. Miss Alice was certainly not with her; or else, in my fright and confusion, I did not see her."

The lugubrious expression on Dick's face while he thus delivered himself, not meaning to be in the least jocular, excited Mrs. St. John's risibilities to such a degree that she could not control her laughter or the muscles of her face for several seconds.

Dick colored, and appeared to be offended.

He could not see anything to laugh at in the taking from him, even by his sister, his money.

Mrs. St. John, seeing the effect her mirth had on her visitor, controlled her countenance as much as possible, and apologized for her rudeness.

"Then it is a joke," said the lady, "that my daughter sauntered on while Miss Price was speaking to you, and that on her leaving you she rejoined her."

"It's quite possible, ma'am," returned Richard, with a disappointed air. "But it seems to me I ain't so hideous but that Miss Alice might have stopped and noticed me."

"True, Mr. Price," said Mrs. St. John; "but your sister, intending the robbery of your person, may have requested Alice to walk on so that she might not be impleaded as *particeps criminis* in the assault."

Dick laughed heartily at this, and seizing Mrs. St. John's hand and giving it a hearty shake, said she ought to devote herself to the law and become a forensically brilliant—as she certainly was in wit and person—member of the bar.

After this sally the junior said, as he withdrew Tom Burt's letter from the place in which he had deposited it previous to leaving the office:

"I think I have good news for you, ma'am, judging from the letter addressed to myself, from that hero of yours, Thomas Burt."

"From poor Thomas!" exclaimed the lady, rising and moving toward where the junior was seated.

The latter rose and advanced toward her, letter in hand.

Mrs. St. John, without stopping to make an apology for her haste, took the package, and, upon tearing it open, read the lines her adopted son had penned to her from the far-off coast of Nicaragua.

From the expressions of pain, pleasure, wonder, solicitude and mirth—emotions of which the letter, in turn, was the cause—that passed over the classic and mobile features of the reader, the junior judged its tenor was not widely different from that which he had received from the same hand.

"Thank God!" murmured the widow, as she involuntarily clasped her hands together and turned her eyes heavenward, "he is well. But what awful sufferings were his, poor boy! What a strong constitution he is blessed with to have withstood the dangers, exposures and sickness through which he has passed! And now, assured that he is living, there can be no further debate about the inheritance. He does not intimate a desire to return immediately. How I long to see my boy!—to take him in my arms and feel that he is with me again!"

"This is his letter to me, ma'am," pursued the junior, when Mrs. St. John had thus expressed herself. "I guess it's much after what he has written to you."

Mrs. St. John exchanged letters, and thus both were put in equal possession of the history the involuntary adventurer had mailed them.

When congratulations were closed on the assurance of the absent one's continued existence, and wishes expressed for his speedy return, Richard Price, Junior, said—but not until he had screwed his face into what he called his "business look," and which came very near starving his hostess upon another round of laughter:

"I've something important to say to you, Mrs. St. John. It was given to me an hour or two ago by Julius Cæsar, Mr. Jefferson's coachman. You know of him, of course? That which I have to speak of concerns your daughter, Miss Alice. I don't know what the sentiments of the young lady are toward Mr. Jefferson, but I trust, for her own sake, they are not serious or permanent."

Mrs. St. John arched her eyebrows with a puzzled air, and replied:

"I do not understand you, Mr. Price?"

"You will, presently, ma'am," returned the junior; "but permit me one or two questions before proceeding."

The lady bowed her head, while her lips trembled and her face lost its color.

"You know I'm a lawyer, and it's the way—by interrogations—that we elicit and often give information."

Then," with a faint smile, and in a hesitating manner, she said, "I am to be placed in the light of a witness?"

"If you please, yes," said Dick. "Now, then, to begin: Has Mr. Jefferson often met your daughter of late?"

"Of late, frequently," she answered.

"Hum!" mentally exclaimed the junior.

"May I ask what impression she, your daughter, has of him?"

"The same as she has of most gentlemen whom she meets at the residences of her friends—which, by-the-way, have greatly increased in number of late. Alice is greatly sought after," said the mother, with pardonable pride. "Her society is much enlivened by her own and your sex. Her health, too, has wonderfully improved, and she thinks there is not the slightest necessity of our removing, for the Winter, to a warmer climate. Since our fortunes have improved we can command greater home-comforts, and she is not exposed to all westhers and impure atmospheres. For these things we are indebted to you and the negro, Julius Cæsar, and, above all, to his grandmother——"

"Who is dead," interrupted the junior.

"Dead! and I have never had the opportunity of seeing and thanking her."

"Has Mr. Jefferson ever visited you and your daughter at this house?" resumed Dick.

"Yes, twice," was the answer.

"Hum!" mentally exclaimed the junior. "The work goes bravely on—the plot thickens. How could that fellow keep sober long enough to pass enfevening with these ladies? He is presentable, I must admit; good-looking, dresses well, talks in that dry-pansy style in which it is said women—I'm sorry for it, if it's true—love to hear men indulge."

Then aloud:

"He has made himself particularly agreeable to your daughter. He is reputed rich."

Mrs. St. John was surprised, but she did not express her feelings.

She remained silent.

The junior continued:

"You are, I presume, aware of the existence of a person named John Jollison?"

"Of course, I know the man. The—the—Mr. Price, may I ask you what all this portends?"

"Your daughter's welfare and yours, ma'am," bluntly answered the junior. "You are aware, of course, that John Jollison is not the man to be entrusted with the property of others."

Mrs. St. John bowed her head, still wondering at the junior's proceedings.

Dick, perceiving this, said:

"You mustn't forget that I am a lawyer, and that you are a witness in what may prove to be an important case."

The widow, reassured, smiled, but apparently was still puzzled.

"You also know of the existence of one William Burt?"

"Certainly."

"And this—this is a leading question, ma'am—they are a pair of scoundrels, who did not hesitate to cheat, and successfully, for a time, the widow and the orphan?"

"Of their character there is no doubt," she fervently answered—"not in my mind."

"Well it needs no proof," resumed Dick. "I aver that Mr. Jefferson is a debauchee—a tool in the hands of these men. They have already, by money and various tricks and devices, for which, however, I am sorry to say they are not amenable at law, cheated them of thousands of dollars—in fact, have nearly ruined him."

"You surprise me!" exclaimed the widow.

"And I purpose astonishing you, ma'am, before I am through," again blandly spoke the junior. "Now, Jollison has not forgotten your inheritance. And he has conceived the idea of throwing this Jefferson in your daughter's society as frequently and under as many favorable circumstances as possible. The object is to bring about a union between them. If it can be done, with your consent, if not, with hers alone. A girl madly in love will assent to almost any proposition of her lover; that looks to their indissoluble union. Married, and her estate in her own hands, and, of course under the control of Jefferson, it would not be long out of the pockets of Jollison and his *confrère* in crime, Mr. Henry Burt."

"I cannot believe that even these wretches would be guilty of a conspiracy so heinous!" cried the widow, as she rose from her seat and with flushed face and flashing eyes walked hurriedly up and down the apartment in which they were. "It is monstrous! What! Invegle a young girl in that fashion, that a few paltry dollars may be wrung from her! Mr. Price, you must surely be mistaken, and yet you are not a dreamer—an imaginative man—but a strong, hard, matter-of-fact thinker."

The junior laughed. It was, however, a low, dry one.

There was just a little expression of pain or disappointment in his countenance as he turned quickly toward the window and looked her steadily in the face.

"What purpose can I have?" he began, "except it be that of saving your daughter from a life of misery, of disorder, perhaps, and you from a thousand miseries, should the curtain ever rise upon the drama the plot of which I have perhaps too abruptly disclosed to you! Now, listen to the words of another—to those of an honest man, though his skin be that of the Ethiop—who is near one of the actors, and who desires to know by his position much that is going on. Listen to the words of Julius Cæsar, through whose intelligence you and your daughter are made comfortable at this hour. Alice, whose life was threatened with consumption, as you yourself believed, may think that rest that she is well to-day. Had he been dishonest or careless, those papers would have been destroyed or sold, but he thought better of them, and gave them to me. You know the rest. Now, listen to what that black-skinned man has revealed to me, and which I have hastened hither to put you in the possession of."

And Richard Price, in his excitement, stood up, and related, with a fervor and eloquence of which even he had never believed himself possessed, the story of the coachman.

Mrs. St. John was enchained, and at the close of her visitor's words threw herself on her knees before him and hysterically sobbed.

Never before had the woman been so aroused.

"Humph!" mentally exclaimed the junior, as he fell back into his normal mood. "This is becoming somewhat theatrical. If continued longer it may even drop to the farcical."

Raising Mrs. St. John to her feet, he led her to a lounge and placed her thereon.

Then he walked to a window, and looking out on the street, softly whistled a popular air.

In a few minutes the lady had conquered her unusual emotion.

CHAPTER XX.

PLOT—AND COUNTERPLOT.

IT is necessary, for the sake of brevity, that this thread in the woof of our strange story should be pursued for another chapter.

At the interview related at the close of the preceding chapter it was agreed between Mrs. St. John and the junior Price that a knowledge of the conspiracy which had been in progress against the happiness and fortune of Alice should be withheld from her, while at the same time watchful eyes should follow the movements of the conspirators, and their tool, Messrs. Burt & Jollison, and the sporting dandy, Jefferson.

With this understanding the interview ended.

A few days later Julius Cæsar again presented himself to his friend, Dick Price, Junior, at his office.

"Hello, Julius!" exclaimed the junior, as the coachman entered the room; "what's up?"

It was his familiar hail.

"A great refumlation, sah!" was the reply of his visitor, "in Mars Jeff'son. He is fixin' himself up fo' de conquest ob de heart ob Miss St. John. Ha, ha!"

"Of course," remarked the junior. "Well?"

"Hain't drunk mo'n a quart ob champagne a day since I seen you, sah. Jollison and Burt, tole him to go to' de young lady."

"Well?"

"Hain't played a game ob billiards since I was beat, sah."

"Well?"

"He dresses kinder up to kill chery night, an' I drives him to reddences ob ladies an' gemmen w'at grub big parties, an' Germans, an' such things."

"Well?"

"Ebery mo'ning de gemmen I spokes ob calls an' sees him, an' dey gib him cards ob invitation, an' perfumed notes an' sich things, makin' him to go to dis place an' to dat, as if he were a little dog, sah, an' sayin' to him 'She'll be dar, sho.'"

"Well?"

"As he tole me *hisself*, dis mo'nin', when I took him down, 'I hab' sinned,' as day say when a gemman is on de high road to a 'big drunk,' as we darkeys call it, he is deeply, deputily, passionately in lub wif Miss St. John, an' swore by all de debbils in de bad place an' de angels in Hebben dat she should be his woman."

The junior bit his nether lip until the blood started, and clinched, with a strong grip, the paper-knife with which, during the above colloquy, he had been playing a tattoo on his desk.

"Pooh! Ass!" the junior muttered. When he had mastered his passion, "Go on, Julius," he said, in his usual tone of voice.

"He meets Miss St. John free or fo' times a week, an' he sl'ays dances wif her; an' she 'pears to enjoy it, dey do say."

"Who says so?" demanded the junior, almost fiercely.

"De servants in whose houses de parties am given," responded the coachman. "I've driven him once or twice to Miss St. John's, but I don't like it sl'ays from home, an' so he leabes his card with ole ob de folks dar fo' her."

"Has he ever, at the house of the St. Johns," demanded the junior—"has he ever met Mrs. St. John there?"

"No, sah," was the prompt answer. "Neber met one ob de ladies. Sometimes dey is neber at hom when he calls, w'ich I consider as very 'markable."

The junior smiled for the first time during the interview.

"All's well, so far," he mused. "But who can tell when the clouds may fall? Young ladies are often witnessed, judging them from the Mattie Price standpoint, and they sometimes permit their affections to rest on worthless fellows. And this Jefferson is a specious, although a shallow and conceited, rascal. Backed by such scoundrels as Jollison and Burt, he may be induced to undertake anything. It is strange that Alice should dance with him so often, and stranger still that she should go so much into society—although," and he sighed as he added, "she ventures into such places only when accompanied by that sister of mine, who has kept me poor all the season by 'borrowing.' She spends it, my money and spending it in gloves, ribbons, and such like trash!"

The coachman then said, in a lower voice, as he looked around the room to see if any one was present other than the junior:

"I've somet'in' 'portant to communicate, sah."

"Out with it, Julius," said the junior, in a less grave tone of voice than he had hitherto employed.

"Sollic! I hears yes'day, sah, what relates to dis bisness."

The junior was all attention.

The coachman, then, in his usual speech, made the subjoined statement:

He was by his master's ante-room when John Jollison and Henry Burt entered. Mr. Jefferson was in bed. The conversation, at the close of the usual commonplace greetings, began by Jollison inquiring what progress he was making with Miss St. John. To which Jefferson replied that, so far, everything appeared to him encouraging; she was a charming girl, and he thought he was just the fellow to meet her tastes; he had taken an opportunity, at the Simonton party, in Clinton Avenue, to escort her to the conservatory, where he fired off a portion of his poetical grumming at her, in connection with love, beauty, flowers and such things, and she appeared delighted at the remarks; this encouraged him, and then, with an earnestness that he thought had won her half over, he pleaded his love for her and asked her to bestow on him, and thus make him happy for ever, her hand and heart.

"Well, Jefferson," demanded Jollison, "what was her answer?"

"'Pon honah, ole fellah," rejoined the polished Jefferson, "she took my proposal as coolly as if she were used to such things—by Jupiter, aw!"

Jollison frowned.

"Did she decline your proposal point-blank?" was demanded.

"Ah, naw," he replied. "She, aw, smiled very sweetly, aw; and she said she was too young to take upon her the responsibilities which grow out of, aw, married life, you know, aw; and then requested me to conduct her to the music-room, where, aw, some young lady, aw—that old Price's daughter—was screaming over a piano, aw—deuced!"

"This business must be closed at once," returned Jollison. "It costs more money than you are aware of to get you the *entrée* into select social gatherings. Since you expressed a preference for Miss St. John and desired to be made personally acquainted with her, we have expended upward of a thousand dollars!"

"The dayvil!" returned Jefferson, running his jeweled fingers through his hair. "I—I thought it was you, aw, Jollison, that desired me to make love to her; and—and I can assure you I am head over heels in that miserable condition with that vewy chawming young lady—I am, 'pon honah!"

A sardonic smile played upon the lips of his visitor.

"Have you any money wherewith to continue in pursuit of this game?" he demanded.

"Aw, not a dollar, old boy," was the response. "You see, that interesting party, Mrs. Jefferson, who claims the honah, aw, of being my maternal progenitah, has arranged matters in such a way, aw, with the trustees of the, aw, estate, that it is difficult to get anything, you know, aw, at present, aw! I'll give you my note, aw," he added, in a dubious manner.

"It wouldn't be worth the paper on which it was written, at the present time," curtly returned Jollison. "Now, we must be plain with each other. Mr. Burt and myself have been talking this matter all over, and we have this proposal to make to you. Listen! Do you think you can understand me?"

"Aw, yes; I think so, Jollison," the dandy said, slowly; "but, aw, I'm confounded dry, you know, and if you will uncork that small bottle there, and hand me a glass of the sparkling contents, aw, I think my wits'll be sharpened, aw!"

Henry Burt looked at Jollison, who slightly inclined his head.

The champagne was handed to Jefferson, who swallowed the contents of the glass at a gulp.

"Aw," he said, "I feel, aw, considerably better, and, aw, I'm ready to hear you, aw, Jollison."

Jefferson here got up, and on wrapping his dressing-gown about him, sat on the side of the bed.

"Briefly, then," commenced Jollison, "Miss St. John is an heiress. When she attains the age of eighteen years, which is now but a few days off, she will be mistress of not less than fifty thousand dollars, in cash and securities that are marketable. Now, it is necessary that she should be married—of course, to you, who are in love with her—immediately. Do you comprehend me?"

"Aw, yes, of course, to be, aw, sure. Good idea that, aw," was the intelligent reply of the dandy.

"Now," resumed Jollison, "to make things sure—positive—we propose an elopement."

"An elopement!" cried Jefferson. "Why, Mr. Jollison, old fellah, aw, you must be crazy to, aw, think of such a thing. S'pose, aw, the young person, Miss St. John, aw, should decline to elope?"

"It's purposed to place her in the embarrassing position of declining. She shall elope with you—without her consent being required."

"The dayvil, aw!" exclaimed the astounded Jefferson.

"We have already bought a certain parson. We've paid him in advance, and handsomely, to perform the ceremony. We, Mr. Burt and myself, will be your witnesses. We'll make the rugged road to matrimony so smooth for you that you shall think you are going on ice."

And Jollison again put on his sardonic grin.

"The dayvil, aw!" cried Jefferson, greatly puzzled at what had been said.

"Now, listen," resumed Jollison. "Pay close attention to what I am about to say. But first, is your coachman reliable?"

"Aw, the niggah, Julius?" said the dandy. "True as steel, I—aw—owe him money, and—aw—that, you know, makes a creditor a true friend."

"Good!" exclaimed Jollison. "Now carry every word I'm about to utter in your mind. It is vital—important to your interest."

"Aw!" chimed in Jefferson. "Give me another glass of that wine, aw!"

It was handed to him and disposed of as before.

"You are to go to the German to be given at the mansion of Mrs. Tapleson, Greene Avenue, Brooklyn, to-morrow night."

"Aw, yes; I know," said Jefferson.

"Miss St. John will be there."

"Aw!" with a little animation on the part of the dandy.

"The mansion of the Tapleson," pursued Jollison, not heeding the interruptions of Jefferson, "is surrounded by grounds. These are laid out in gardens, parterres, conservatories. The grounds are thick with shrubbery. They are to be illuminated. At midnight there will be a supper served in a pavilion placed in the upper part of the grounds. Behind this pavilion is a cluster of trees, and immediately beyond, on the left, is a gate or door which opens on an adjoining street. Do you comprehend me?" suddenly demanded Jollison.

"Ah, to be sure, old fellah," was the answer. "I say let me have another—aw—taste of that wine. It—aw—builds me up—aw—exhilarates me—sharpens my intellects, aw!"

Burt gratified his wish.

"Now," resumed Jollison, "you can readily induce Miss St. John to enter the clump of trees—particularly as the grounds are to be illuminated. Your business will be to saunter with her toward the gate, keeping her in lively conversation. Recite as much poetry as you please to her; and when near, or at the gate, two men—to be plain with you, myself and Mr. Burt—will there seize her, prevent her from making any outcry, hurry, or carry

her, if necessary, to a carriage—your own, with your own driver—which we'll manage to have at hand, and put her in it. You are to follow, and together we will be directly driven to the house of Rev. Mr. Slavin, where, in our presence, and before the girl is well over her fright, she shall be made your lawful wife. There, perhaps, will be a little trouble; but that will pass off, and with the girl as your spouse, you can, in her name, administer upon and control her fortune; and," Jollinon added, with emphasis, "we shall insist on a small per centage of this fortune for the expense and trouble to which we have been and may yet be put."

Jefferson was delighted.

"Aw!" he exclaimed. "Dem the—aw—fortune! Give me the girl—aw—and I'll be content. But," he added, reflectively, "is there—aw—no danger! Without her consent, you know?"

"Not if you are bold," returned Jollison. "Remember the adage, 'Faint heart never won fair lady.'"

"Dat's w'at I hearn dem say dis mo'nin', sah," concluded the coachman. "I hurried heah to tole yo' ob de scheme."

To her mind there could be no one gentler or nobler.

Strange to say, so great was the crush at the Tapleson gathering that no one noticed—not even Miss Price, whose mind had been given to her little vanities and conquests—the absence of her friend, Alice St. John. However, during her indisposition and convalescence she continued near her, declining the most tempting invitations to the fashionable reunions of the time—and thus the social world, for a season, lost two of its brightest and most beautiful stars—in themselves a perfect constellation.

As for Jefferson, deprived of his liberty and his wine, he lived like an ascetic in his cell. In court he did not attempt to defend his conduct. Powerful friends of his mother, however, interfered in his behalf, and he was liberated by the judge, on his promising to go abroad.

(To be continued.)

"Floating to Fortune" was commenced in No. 841.

LIVE CLAMS AS RAT-TRAPS.

A RESIDENT of New Berlin, N.Y., bought two dozen clams recently, took them home and spread meal on them. The next morning he found that thirty-two rats in search of meal had been caught by tails and toes by twenty-three clams. The unoccupied clam must have bossed the job. One clam had three rats.

EXPLOSION OF A TEAPOT.

AS Florence Sullivan, aged twelve, of No. 140 Monroe Street, New York, was leaning over a stove at No. 108 Wooster Street, the tea-kettle exploded, and she was severely scalded on the face.

DEATH IN THE RING.

A CIRCUS performer in Illinois broke his back while practicing, the other day, and the strange scene ensued of a clergyman performing the last offices of religion by the side of a dying man in tights and spangles, stretched in the sawdust of the ring.

THE GREAT WALKING MATCH.

THE great international pedestrian contest which ended on March 15th, at Gilmore's Garden, with a victory for Charles-Rowell, of England, occasioned more excitement than any similar contest ever did either in England or this country. Our boys have no doubt heard of the Astley champion belt, which was won in January, 1878, by Daniel O'Leary, of Chicago. This belt was valued at five hundred dollars, and it was a sore grief to see it taken away from England by an American pedestrian, so when English walkers heard that O'Leary had been challenged they selected Rowell as their representative, and sent him over to compete for the much-desired trophy.

Pedestrianism is in itself a good thing, and every boy ought to be a good walker, although there is no sense in carrying it so far as to seriously injure one's constitution and break down one's health, as it is feared O'Leary has done. If the boys on their way to school, office and shop, would make a practice of walking instead of riding in horse-cars and stages, they would find their minds clearer, their eyes brighter, and their bodies hardier and fresher. Boys who are confined to school or office all day need this exercise to counteract the sedentary habit of the day. Those of our readers who live in the country do more walking than city boys. Pedestrian matches, when they tend to promote healthful exercise, are highly commendable; when, however, they go beyond this, and descend into mere tests of human endurance for gain, they become exhibitions to be shunned and discouraged.

The late match opened on Monday, March 10th, at 1 o'clock A.M., with four contestants: Daniel O'Leary, the American champion, Charles A. Harriman, a Bostonian, and John Ennis, an Irish Chicagoan. The portraits of these four men show them to be fine, hearty and muscular fellows, and their records prove that in endurance they were very well matched.

Daniel O'Leary, who was, until he withdrew from the contest, the champion long-distance pedestrian of the world, was born in County Cork, Ireland, June 29th, 1846, but for many years he has been a resident of Chicago, and it is said that the terrible conflagration in that city in 1871 was occasioned by the kicking over of a kerosene lamp by a cow belonging to his mother. He is 5ft. 7in. in height, and was trained down to 145 pounds in weight when he started in the late match. He first entered the field as a walker in September, 1874, at the West Side Skating Rink, in Chicago, in a match against time, in which he walked 48¼ miles in 8h. 30m. In the following March he beat Wilson Reid at Gilmore's Garden, New York, in a 20-mile walk, making it in 3h. 34m. 14s. In September, 1875, he beat John DeWitt at the Rink, New York, in a 100-mile walk. In October he beat John Ennis at Chicago in a 100-mile match, making the score in 18h. 53m. 40s. In November of the same year he defeated E. P. Weston in six days' walk, making 501 miles and 1,152 feet in the allotted time. This was his first six-day walk, but since that time he has often been on the track for an entire week, very rarely being beaten. Indeed his exertions in this respect have been so numerous and so arduous that his physician attributes his breakdown in the late contest to his previous over-exertions. In his anxiety for victory he had strained nature beyond the safe point, and now he must pay the penalty.

Charles A. Harriman was the only American-born contestant in the match. He is a native of New England, and his first walking-match was on February 19th, 1878, when he beat the then best time in 100 miles, making it in 18h. 48m. 40s. He tried the same feat again in April, but stopped at the nineteenth mile. Since then he has walked in a number of matches of one, two and three days' duration, but this contest was his first six days' match, and the result showed that so long a period of constant strain and struggle was beyond his powers, for he kept growing weaker and weaker as the time lengthened out, and at the end he was lost.

John Ennis was born at Richmond Harbor, County Longford, Ireland, June 4th, 1842. He stands 5ft. 8in. in height, and when in condition weighs 150 pounds. In 1868 he won a local champion belt, and held it for the required time, three years; but his first public appearance of note was on October 16th, 1875, when he met O'Leary in Chicago, in a hundred mile race, in which O'Leary gave him a start of ten miles. Ennis stopped after making 67 miles. In the following January he undertook to beat O'Leary's best 100-mile time, and did it in 18h. 42m. 34s., which, however, was nearly a minute more than Harriman's record for the same distance. Ennis was after this engaged in a number of matches, but rarely successful, owing to trouble with his stomach, which frequently compelled him to leave the track before the time had expired. As a skater he has made a better record than as a pedestrian. On January 6th, 1876, he skated 100 miles in 11h. 37m. 45s., making the best skating time on record.

Charles Rowell, the plucky little Englishman, who has succeeded in carrying back with him to the old country the much-coveted belt, was born at Chesterton, Cambridgeshire, England, in 1854. He is not only the youngest but also the shortest of the four contestants in this match, being but 5ft. 6in. tall. In early life he was a boatman, but although a good oarsman, never made any particular mark in handling the sculls. As a pedestrian he never made any especial record. He is a good runner, and probably owes his success to this fact. In 1873, in a race open to all, he made his first public appearance. He has gone 97½ miles inside of an hour, and 19 miles in 1h. 57m. He has walked in several matches, but has not won any until this one, which was a "go as you please" match, and the contestants were permitted to walk or run, as they chose.

It is astonishing what great excitement was occasioned by this contest. A great amount of money changed owners, as the evil practice of betting was largely indulged in. One of the greatest misfortunes attaching to public sports of any kind is the betting. Many of our young men and boys have seriously hurt themselves in the estimation of their friends and employers in their indulgence in betting. It is a bad habit. Boys, don't do it. Athletic sports of all kinds are commendable, but cherish the sport for its own sake, and not for the sake of gambling on the result.

DEATH IN THE RING.

LIVE CLAMS AS RAT-TRAPS.—THIRTY-TWO OF THE RODENTS CAPTURED BY TWENTY-THREE BIVALVES.

TRUE STORIES ABOUT THE INDIANS.

NO. X.

THE ADVENTURES OF LEWIS WETZEL, THE INDIAN-KILLER.

A TYPICAL specimen of the semi-savage borderers is found in Lewis Wetzel, a man who was a famous and popular character in his day, but whose exploits have been judged very differently from different points of view. The moralist and historian, writing in the calm security of his study, is often inclined to call out upon him for a brutal murderer; but to the neighbors of the man himself, exposed as they were to the constant remembrance and dread of Indian atrocity, this great slayer of redskins seemed a hero of the purest water.

If we judge him according to his lights, his opportunities, and the circumstances of the time, we shall, perhaps, be able neither wholly to praise, nor utterly condemn his conduct.

One thing is certain, that few would have cared to condemn Lewis Wetzel to his face. His appearance is described as most formidable. He was thick-set, but not remarkably tall. His dark complexion was deeply marked with the small-pox. He had intensely black eyes, wild and eager, and when he was angry, glowing like those of a wild beast. His hair was jet-black, and so long that when combed out it fell below his knees. Any Shawnee or Delaware brave would have been a proud man for life if he could but have adorned his leggins with those raven locks; the grizzly bear's claws and the buffalo's horns would not have been counted a nobler decoration.

The Wetzels, a German family, were among the earliest settlers on Wheeling Creek. There were four or five boys of them, who grew up stout, hardy fellows, upon a plain but plentiful diet; and, without much trouble from the three R's, were schooled by the rough training of the forest to play the man at an age when our youth have barely learned to read of their adventures.

Lewis Wetzel was thirteen when, one day, as he was lounging in front of his father's cabin, he saw the muzzle of a gun pointed at his heart from behind an outhouse. He drew back, yet not so quickly but that the shot tore across his breast, grazing the bone. The lurking Indians leaped out of their cover, seized him and his brother Jacob, and carried them off, with whatever plunder they could lay their hands on.

For two days the young prisoners were hurried away from home, Lewis suffering much from his wound, but not daring to complain, lest he should be knocked on the head forthwith. On the second night he and his brother stole away from their sleeping guards. But before they had gone far they found it hard work to trudge along barefoot, and Lewis had the hardihood to go back to the Indians' camp and help himself to a couple of pair of moccasins. As they slept so soundly, he actually returned a second time to get his rifle and gun from them. Then the boys set out homeward. The Indians chased them on horseback, but they succeeded in hiding themselves till the enemy was out of the way, and reaching the Ohio, made a raft by lashing logs together, on which they crossed the river and got home safely. This is the first recorded exploit of the future hero of the frontiers.

Another brother was taken prisoner twice, but each time contrived to escape. A third had also been in the hands of the Indians.

Thus early did these lads get a taste of savage cruelty, and before all of them had grown up to manhood they had other reason for their bitter hatred to the very name of Indian. Their father was murdered by some prowling party—shot in a canoe, which he had just strength left to paddle to the shore, where a stone still marks the place of his death. Over this grave his sons vowed lifelong vengeance against the whole Indian race. Faithfully and fearfully was that vow kept. Henceforth, where a red man was concerned, they knew neither truce nor pity, nor even good faith.

Lewis Wetzel soon became known as one of the most active and daring rangers of the woods. Here, now was his home, and his business in life was as much to kill Indians as to gain his livelihood. He hunted them like wild beasts, and such was his own keenness and sagacity, that though they returned his hatred with interest, he came safe out of a hundred encounters, often against heavy odds, and seldom failed to make the enemy pay dear for a sight at him.

The most celebrated of these encounters reminds us of the old classical story of the Horatii and Curiatii. He was once chased by four Indians, leading as he ran, an accomplishment of his in which the red men do not seem to have been able to imitate him, even if, on this occasion, they had not dropped their guns to make more haste, never doubting but to be a match for him with their tomahawks. When they had run some way, and one of the pursuers was close upon him, Wetzel turned round and shot him. On he sped again till the second Indian had come so near that when Wetzel faced him he seized the rifle and twisted it upward. A hasty struggle took place; every moment was precious. But before the other Indians arrived to the help of their comrade, Wetzel had managed to twist the muzzle against his adversary's breast, and pulled the trigger, quick as thought, without raising the butt to his shoulder. Then released, he was off again, and the two survivors showed themselves wisely cautious about approaching him. As often as he halted they dodged behind trees; but catching one of them behind a small trunk, too thin to cover his whole body, the sharp-eyed ranger put him also *hors de combat* with a shot through his thigh. Then the fourth Indian saw good to give up the chase, and, in his turn, ran for his life.

Many were such tales told by the frontiersmen of Lewis Wetzel's prowess. Once he joined a party which set out to chastise a body of marauding Indians. Some of the settlers who staid at home had subscribed to offer a reward of a hundred dollars for the first Indian scalp, and there were many besides Wetzel who hoped to win this prize—a little fortune in the backwoods. But when they drew near the enemy's camp, the latter were found to be too strong for them. A retreat was determined upon, and all turned their backs except Wetzel, who said he had come out to hunt Indians, and did not mean to go home like a fool with his finger in his mouth. The rest might do as they pleased; he would take a scalp.

In vain his comrades talked to him of the danger. They were obliged to leave him alone in the forest. Cautiously he prowled about, hoping to fall in with a straggling party from the Indian force. At night he durst not light a fire for fear of drawing them upon him.

He was obliged to keep himself warm by making what was called a "coal-pit." He dug a hole in the ground, filled it with a slow fire made of strips of oak-bark off a dead tree, and covered it up again, leaving one or two air-holes into which he could blow if the smoldering mass required stirring up. Then, on the top, he spread a layer of bark or branches, and squatted down, with the "coal-pit" between his legs, and his blanket drawn over his head. In this position a hunter could make shift to sleep comfortably enough, with his ears wide awake, and his arms in his hand, ready at the slightest alarm.

Next day he saw a smoke, and, thus guided, made his way to a camp, where two Indians had carelessly left their kettle and blankets beside a burning fire, while they were hunting. Wetzel hid himself in the bushes. By-and-by came the Indians, who sat down to supper, and began to sing and joke together with roars of laughter, little dreaming whose eyes were watching them.

Wetzel expected to kill them both as soon as they should be asleep. He was much disappointed to see one of them go off with his rifle and a burning-brand—to shoot deer, probably. He did not come back all night; and when the birds began to chirp, announcing that the dawn was at hand, Wetzel coolly stabbed the Indian in his sleep, took home the scalp and received the reward.

Another time he came upon four Indians sleeping, and killed three of them by the dim flicker of their fire, as deliberately as if they had been so many snakes. To his disgust, the fourth woke up in time to escape him. An enthusiastic biography speaks of this brave action with the warmest admiration; but surely we can imagine braver deeds.

Again, one stormy evening, he took shelter in the loft of a deserted cabin. As he was laying himself out to spend a comfortable evening, six Indians arrived, and began to make the same preparations in the room below. Wetzel fully expected to be discovered before long; he meant to leap among them with his knife and make a dash for the door. But luckily the savages did not smell the blood of an Englishman, and when they had eaten a hearty supper they all fell asleep. Then he slipped down from the loft, cautiously picked his way among the sleeping bodies, and gained the outside without rousing any of them.

Most men would have been content with such an escape, and would have hastened to put as many miles as possible between them and this nest of hornets. But that was not Wetzel's way. He hid himself behind a log in front of the cabin, and waited patiently all night, as a hunter sure of game. At early dawn a tall savage stepped from the door, and stretching up both hands in a long, hearty yawn, seemed to draw in new life from the pure, invigorating atmosphere. In an instant Wetzel had his finger upon the trigger, and the next moment the Indian fell heavily to the ground, his life's blood gushing upon the young grass, brilliant with the morning dewdrops. Then the daring woodsman, to whom Indian blood was the most beautiful thing in the world, ran away, confiding in his powers, with this short start, to leave the slain man's comrades far behind.

While still a young man, Wetzel joined the army, but, as may be imagined, found the restraints of discipline and obedience very little to his mind. He was then employed as a scout, and so long as his duty was to lead the soldiers to the enemy, no fault could be found with him. It was another matter, however, when General Harmer, his commander, wishing to treat of peace with the Indians, ordered a truce to be observed.

Generals and governors might make peace; but Wetzel, who fought for his own hand, had little thought of obeying any power but his thirst for revenge. So he took the opportunity of killing, or, in plain English, murdering an Indian who was coming to the quarters of the army, on faith of the truce.

The scout made no secret of what he had done; he never could be made to see that there was any harm in killing an Indian under any circumstances, and there were plenty of his fellows who entirely agreed with him. The Indians did not keep faith with them, and why should they set a better example?

But, naturally, General Harmer took a different view of the matter. Angry at this disregard of his orders, and the threatened failure of the negotiations that were going on, he had Wetzel seized and confined in irons.

Surprised and indignant, the prisoner found himself likely to be hanged for a crime which, in his eyes, was nothing but a virtue. Little had he ever thought to have to do with the law, and its forms and scruples were as strange to him as the rules of politeness or the doctrines of religion. Bequeathing an interview with the general, he seriously proposed

EXPLOSION OF A TEAPOT.

THE GREAT WALKING MATCH.—DANIEL O'LEARY.

that, if he must be punished, he should be given up to the Indians, the kinsmen of his victim. Let them stand in a circle with their weapons, set him in the middle with a tomahawk only, and he asked no better than to be allowed to make a fair fight for it.

Of course the matter could not be settled thus, and in a few days the bold backwoodsman began to find himself in a miserable plight. To a man like him, accustomed to the freedom of the woods, confinement was as bad as death. He declared that his health would give way if he could not take some exercise.

The general took pity on him, and ordered that his fetters should be taken off, and that he should have leave to walk in the precincts of the fort, still handcuffed, however, and under a guard.

As soon as he was out of the gate, Wetzel, eagerly sniffing the fresh air, began to caper about like a dog or a colt let loose. He would run a few yards, then turn back; next time he ran a little further, but came back again to join his guards, and to start off once more, each time making greater and greater trials of their vigilance.

They laughed good-naturedly at his antics, which seemed natural enough in the poor fellow's case. But they did not laugh when, having taken a still longer tether, he at last bounded away in good earnest, and was almost out of shot before they saw that he was bent on escape. Away they went in pursuit, but, handcuffed as he was, he outstripped them, and gained the shelter of the woods which he knew and loved so well.

Here it was not easy to catch him, though the revengeful Indians were turned on his trail like hounds after a fox. He gained a dense thicket, and squeezed himself under a fallen tree. As he lay thus hidden, he heard the Indians shouting all round him, and even passing over his head; and his heart beat so violently that he fancied their quick ears must catch its thumping.

When at nightfall they had drawn off, and all was quiet, he left his cover to steal down to the river bank. He had a friend on the other side to whom he might trust himself; but how was he to cross the wide and strong stream of the Ohio? He could not find a canoe. With his hands fastened as they were, he could not make a raft. There was nothing for it but to swim.

So, handcuffed and all, he plunged into the river, and by swimming on his back contrived at last to gain the other side, but in a state of such exhaustion that for a time he lay on the shore without being able to rise.

He reached his friend's cabin, and was not disappointed of a friendly reception. A file soon rid him of his handcuffs. Then he was off to the woods of Kentucky, set up in life again with a gun and a blanket, which was all such a man required in the way of furniture and stock-in-trade.

After this he took it for granted that all danger was past, and resumed his old occupation of hunting and scouting. He showed himself openly at races, shooting-matches and wrestling bouts, rightly counting on the sympathy of the people. He was reckoning, however, without—General Harmer, who determined to have him, and offered a large reward for his capture. But no reward would tempt any Kentuckian to lay hands on the famous Indian-slayer; he was as safe here as Rob Roy was among his clansmen, or Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest.

More than once parties of soldiers were sent against him, with orders to take him dead or alive; but once he threatened to shoot the first man who approached him, and the soldiers knew better than to put his promise to the test. Again a larger party was sent out. Wetzel's friends gathered round him in arms.

The officer in command got a hint of what was likely to happen if he tried to carry out his orders, and prudently gave up the attempt.

At last the bold outlaw fell into the hands of the law. He was amusing himself in a tavern when some soldiers came by, seized him, and carried him off to the general. Once more he found himself in hateful fetters, with the gallows close in view before him. But as soon as his arrest became known there was an outburst of popular indignation. "If such a man to be hanged for killing an Indian," asked the backwoodsmen, "when the Indians are killing us without scruple, and we can ill spare the services of the best scout on the frontier?" The excitement was so great that bands of armed men were preparing to release their favorite by force. When things had come to such a pass General Harmer thought well to imitate the discretion of his subordinates.

He gave way to the temper of the people and set Wetzel at liberty.

Like some other heroes, in the latter part of his life the champion of the backwoods disappears under a cloud.

THE END.

DIVING, PAST AND PRESENT.

(Continued.)

TOWARD the end of the last century Robert Fulton, the renowned engineer, who was afterward the first to introduce steamboats on the American rivers, turned his attention to submarine mechanics.

He manufactured a submarine boat or chest, and exhibited it at the mouth of the Seine, seeking to obtain the patronage of the French Government.

Fulton claimed that his boat could do great things in the way of blowing to pieces the men-of-war that so obstinately blockaded the French ports. The invention was not much noticed at that time, so, in disgust Fulton returned to America and exhibited his invention at New York and other cities. Though admitted to be ingenious, there were difficulties in the working of it that could not well be overcome.

Many of our young readers have read some account of the siege of Gibraltar, and of the way in which the British general, Elliott, destroyed the floating batteries of the Spaniards by firing red-hot cannon-shot into them. This siege terminated in 1783, and about four years afterward Messrs. John and William Braithwaite began operations with a view to the recovery of the guns from those submerged Spanish batteries, the cannon being mostly of bronze, and of great value.

The brothers Braithwaite were successful in their undertaking; but some of their operations having taken place near the Moorish side of the straits, they were obliged to propitiate the Emperor of Morocco by presenting him with eight of the finest guns they recovered.

Of course, this seriously interfered with the profits of the undertaking, but the Braithwaites made sufficient to induce them to enter into other undertakings of the same kind.

The good ship *Hartwell*, an East Indiaman, with a large quantity of coin on board, as well as a rich cargo of tin and lead, had been wrecked off Bona Vista, in the Cape de Verde Islands.

In the years 1789 and 1790, having finished their fishing for Spanish cannon in the Straits of Gibraltar, the Braithwaites undertook to see what they could recover from the wreck of the *Hartwell*.

The first survey proved that the timbers of the vessel had parted, and the cargo was lying—some in five fathoms, some six, and some in seven fathoms of water. But Mr. John Braithwaite, by means of his diving apparatus, which was not exactly a bell, nor yet a dress, succeeded in recovering the whole of the specie, and a large quantity of the tin and lead.

The Brothers Braithwaite then entered into negotiations with the British Government for raising or destroying the *Royal George*, a British line-of-battle ship that had been sunk off Spithead, and which was found to be a great nuisance to vessels entering or leaving the harbor of Portsmouth.

Messrs. Braithwaite made all necessary preparations for commencing work, but unfortunately it so happened that whilst the ship belonged to the Admiralty Department of the Government her guns were claimed by the Board of Ordnance. The two Government departments could not agree as to the manner in which the expenses were to be divided and the salvage shared, so the Messrs. Braithwaite declined to commence the work. They, however, afterwards operated with success upon the wreck of the *Earl of Aberga*venny, an outward-bound East Indiaman, from which they succeeded in recovering £75,000, chiefly in silver dollars. In this case the vessel was lost in ten fathoms, or sixty feet of water.

In the year 1817 Mr. Angell, one of the Portsmouth officials, went down in a diving-bell, and surveyed the wreck of the *Royal George*, but he seems to have considered it impossible to raise the vessel or recover any of the stores; at all events, he did nothing with any intention.

In the meantime, a certain Mr. Deane had invented a machine, by the use of which he imagined people would, without risk of suffocation, be able to enter burning houses and recover valuable property.

But unluckily, the representatives of the various British fire companies did not see the utility of Mr. Deane's invention, so that gentleman offered it for diving purposes, and had some success in dealing with two vessels sunk off the Isle of Wight. Mr. Deane then succeeded in raising twenty-eight guns from the wreck of the *Royal George*, about the year 1834; but the Government complained of the slowness of the work, so it was suspended. Mr. Deane, however, was a man of great enterprise, and he soon engaged in another and more difficult task.

Many years before the *Royal George* was even built, in July, 1545, when Henry VIII. ruled over England, a ship called the *Mary Rose* had been sunk in the same manner as the *Royal George* afterward went down, and not far from the same spot.

Nearly three hundred years passed away, and few save historical readers knew that such a vessel had ever existed, till in 1836 some fishermen, whose nets had been repeatedly damaged by something protruding from the bottom of the sea, made complaints, and investigation revealed the fact that this was the wreck of the *Mary Rose*.

Mr. Deane at once set to work on the *Mary Rose*, clad in his apparatus, which successive improvements had rendered a little like the diving helmets now worn.

The hull of the vessel was so far covered that it was impossible to remove that; he, however, succeeded in bringing away a piece of the mainmast which injured the fishing nets and some portions of the wreck.

He also raised five brass guns which bore the date 1536, and the name of the founders, "Robert and John Owyn"; also twenty guns formed of wrought-iron bars firmly secured together by iron hoops to the number of thirty-three to each gun; also some iron and some granite cannon-balls, eight ancient yew-bows, and a number of miscellaneous articles.

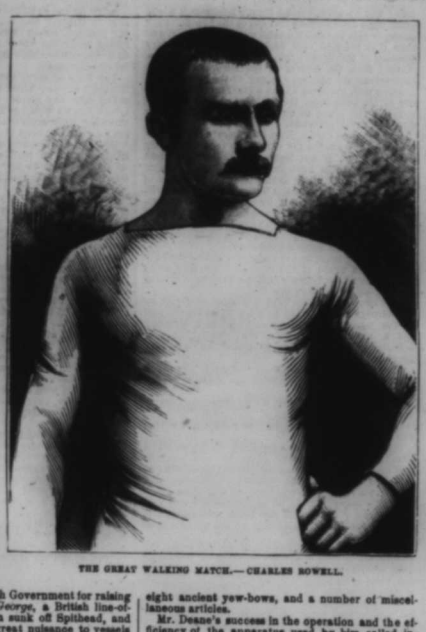
Mr. Deane's success in the operation and the efficiency of the apparatus used by him called increased attention to diving matters, and amongst those who closely studied submarine engineering was Colonel Pasley, of the Royal Engineers, under whose direction were shortly to be performed some of the most remarkable diving operations.

Our illustration for this week represents a new diving apparatus, invented by a celebrated French engineer.

The centre machine is the diving-bell proper, and the two cases on each side of it were to be used to supply condensed air to the main bell.

It will be further explained next week.

[To be continued.]



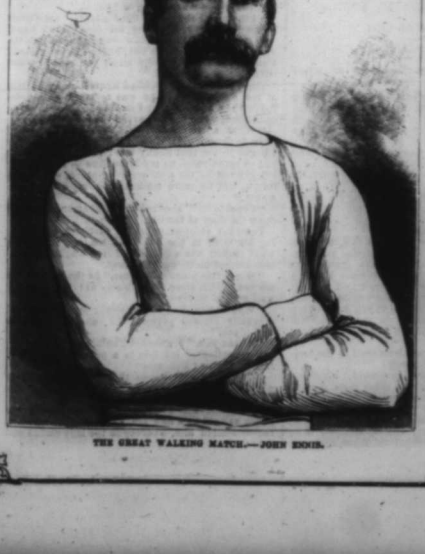
THE GREAT WALKING MATCH.—CHARLES ROWELL.

SWIMMING.

OF all the athletic exercises, swimming is the most easily learned; but in learning to swim instead of to float, we begin at the wrong end, and with the wrong notion that swimming (instead of our own natural buoyancy) floats us in the water. Taken in the right order they come naturally. Any person who is accustomed to the water knows that the greatest difficulty he has to contend with is to *dive* or *sink* (*i.e.*, to strive against the natural buoyancy of the body) and not to float. Let any of our readers try to pick up a bright object from the bottom in five or six feet of water, and the very strong resistance he meets with will convince him that it is far easier to remain at the top than to go to the bottom.

When a horse, dog, pig, or bullock gets out of its depth it finds itself at once lifted up, and floating with its head above water, and, having no fear of sinking, its anxiety to reach the shore prompts it to make the natural motion with its four limbs.

Man has not, like the quadruped, the advantage of guiding himself in the water in his ordinary posi-



THE GREAT WALKING MATCH.—JOHN ENNIS.

THE GREAT WALKING MATCH.—CHARLES A. HARRIMAN.

tion; and his uninstructed reason becomes a worse guide than the unerring instinct of the brute. Fear prompts him to raise his arms out of the water, and *then* they tend to sink him, whilst the necessary position of the beast's four limbs keep them under water; thus, the efforts of the timorous to save themselves are the very cause of their drowning. Tossing with the arms above water, screaming with the mouth wide open, they get out of breath, water supplies the place of air, and they are choked or stifled—that is, drowned.

But the *time* that it takes to frustrate their natural buoyancy proves the very thing they ignorantly doubted; for, if not lighter in themselves than water, they would have sunk like a stone. Nature has here benevolently given us this buoyant principle of safety in common with the lower order of animals, and we perversely mar it by our ignorant terrors, and by absurdly fancying (according to the vulgar error) that the action of swimming, which is only moving through the water, keeps us on the *surface*, and not *our own* natural buoyancy.

The mouth must be kept carefully closed until the arms arrive again at the third position, then a full breath should be taken whilst the hands are returning to position number one.

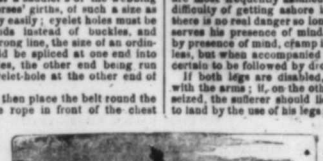
This drawing of the breath is most essential, as all learners are very apt to draw their breath just at the moment they strike out, and to a certainty get a mouthful of water, the effect of which, especially in the sea, is to make the tyro very nervous.

These strokes in swimming should be taken slowly and steadily, not exceeding a speed of twenty per minute.

Having got so far, now is the time when learners require some amount of assistance; and one learner can help another by following a few simple rules.

Have a belt made at a saddler's of the webbing generally used for horses' girths, of such a size as will go round the body easily; eyelet holes must be punched into the ends instead of buckles, and about two yards of strong line, the size of an ordinary little finger, should be spliced at one end into one of the eyelet-holes, the other end being run through the other eyelet-hole at the other end of the belt.

The teacher should then place the belt round the pupil's waist with the rope in front of the chest and, holding the other end in his hand, must direct him to enter the water to the middle, and then strike out; the teacher walking backward in his depth, or along the boards if in a bath, holding the end rather tight, so as to keep the learner in the most favorable position for swimming and prevent his sinking.



SWIMMING.—FLOATING.

The pupil must keep his head well back on the shoulders, and the back hollowed, which tends to the inflation of the chest, and gives more buoyancy, and he must at the same time kick out his legs well.

By repeating this exercise several times he will get more confidence in the sustaining power of the water.

Sometimes the rope is passed over a pulley, at the end of a projecting beam, or crane, working on a centre, and giving way with the movements of the swimmer; a strong wire is stretched across a large bath, and kept tight with screws; on this a pulley runs, and to it is attached the wire belonging to the belt, buckled round the learner's waist, the cord in this case being attached at the back.

The contrivance (than which nothing can be more simple) will not only facilitate the acquirement of the art of swimming, but enable any one who may be a tolerably good swimmer to instruct any number of pupils in the art, by imitating the actions of the frog.

Now that swimming has become to be considered a necessary part of every boy's education in those public schools that have any water within reach, this simple apparatus will prove the more useful, as it supersedes the necessity of being taught in a large space of water, which may not always be at hand.

Repeat this practice several times, and on each occasion you will get more confidence in the great sustaining power of the water; but if you cannot get any assistance in the manner above described, let one of your feet occasionally touch the bottom.

The manner of kicking out the legs should be precisely similar to that of the frog—i.e., as you draw your arms and hands into the first position you must at the same time draw up your feet and legs toward the body, and kick them out again, at the same time as you strike out with the arms and hands.

There is not so much importance attached to the stroke of the legs as to that of the arms, and for this reason, that as progress is made with the latter, the legs are sure to follow. A good swimmer very seldom swims on the breast since the side stroke in swimming has become so popular, although confidence is gained with the breast stroke upon attempting the other.

After learning to swim a few strokes, you should thoroughly acquire the position of floating, that being the easiest mode of supporting the body; indeed, when not able to swim, you can always learn to float in salt water in a single lesson, simply by placing yourself on your back, throwing your chest well out of the water, and the head well back.

With beginners it is always very difficult to get them to keep their heads back; they generally lift their heads up, principally on account of the water entering their ears, the result being that the body is thrown into a position that entirely prevents them from floating, because it brings the mouth under water.

The arms can be placed in any position, but it is preferable for them to be stretched right out, the palm of the hand just under the water; by this position the learner has a better mode of balancing himself; otherwise he is very liable to turn over.

After he has obtained sufficient confidence to be able to balance himself, he can place his arms in any position, either by the side, across the chest, or folded under the head—the latter position is best, as it throws the chest more forward, and naturally inflates the lungs.

The lives of many persons have been saved by this simple plan; whilst thousands could have been saved had they merely remained quiet, with their heads thrown well back, instead of struggling and throwing their arms out of the water, which naturally causes the head to sink.

Of course it is much easier to accomplish this in the sea than in fresh water. If in the latter, it would be better to just paddle the hands at your side a little, which will prevent your feet from sinking.

It is much easier for a woman to float than a man, from the formation of the body.

One can swim some distance on the breast, by lifting first one arm over the head, and taking a circular stroke toward the side. Many can swim more than a hundred yards in this way as fast as some of our best swimmers on the side.

To acquire the power of floating well is to possess the key to all kinds of swimming on scientific principles; it is also very useful in cases of that terrible bane of the swimmer, the muscular contraction called the *cramp*, whatever part of the body which is thus attacked being rendered temporarily powerless.

All are affected alike, and perhaps more good swimmers have been drowned by cramp than by anything else. Strong men and good swimmers, when seized with the cramp, have been known to sink instantly, overcome with the sudden pain, and nothing but the very greatest presence of mind can save the victim.

The legs and arms are the parts of the body that are most frequently assailed, by which means the difficulty of getting ashore is much increased, but there is no real danger so long as the swimmer preserves his presence of mind. When accompanied by presence of mind, cramp is comparatively harmless, but when accompanied with fear, it is almost certain to be followed by drowning.

If both legs are disabled, try to paddle ashore with the arms; if, on the other hand, the arms are seized, the sufferer should lie on his back, and get to land by the use of his legs; if unable to do either, he should throw himself on his back and endeavor to float until succor reaches him. Under such circumstances, some people recommend the following method:

Turn on the back at once, kick out the legs in the air, without minding the pain, and rub the part attacked with one hand smartly, whilst the other is used in paddling toward the shore. It is very easy to give these directions, but very difficult to follow. Cramp appears to deprive the person attacked of all reason for the time, and to render him quite powerless, with mingled pain and terror.

The causes of cramp are usually believed to be two: the first is from indigestion, for those in good health are seldom attacked by it; the second is the over-exertion of muscles that have been but little used, and when a very strong stroke with the legs or arms is given, it usually comes on; therefore easy swimming is to be preferred to that with sudden strokes or jerks.

[To be continued.]

SOMETHING ABOUT GLASS AND ITS MANUFACTURE.

NOW we will commence to follow the manufacture of the glass step by step. Our furnace contains a roaring fire, a number of the pots are standing ready in a state of red-heat in another furnace close by, and the materials, according to the kind of glass to be made, are mixed in a large metal vessel with a rather less than an equal quantity of old broken glass, which saves a great deal of expense, as it costs almost nothing, and when melted mixes up with the rest and helps to form new glass. The whole is now called frit, and is ready to be melted.

The pots are carried as quickly as possible (so as to prevent their having time to cool) and placed in the principal furnace, those with the side openings having them turned toward the opening in the furnace. This process of placing the pots is not repeated every time that a pot of frit has to be melted, as they will last for many days before it is necessary to replace them by new ones. A man at each pot fills it by passing a sort of shovel containing the frit through the opening in the pot, and when it is full stirs the contents with an iron rod for two or three hours.

When these are melted and room has thus been made at the top for more, he puts in another lot of frit, again stirring it, and so on until the pot is full of melted frit. The door is then closed, and the heat of the furnace having been increased, the pots are left from twenty to thirty hours. This last part of the process is called founding, and when founded, the contents of the pots are in a state of metal.

SWIMMING.—SWIMMING WITH THE CORD.

A man called the skimmer now comes and skims the surface, so as to remove any impurities that may have settled on the top, and the metal is then ready to be taken from the pot for working into shape.

Now, before going further, I must tell you that the process of melting which I have described so far is the same with each of the different kinds of glass named above, the nature of the frit only varying according to the sort of glass that is to be made.

From the point we have now reached the manufacture of the several glasses is proceeded with in different ways, and for want of space we shall not touch upon the way in which the four kinds of sheet glass are made up from the metal, but go on where we left off and describe the working-up of flint and bottle-glass.

There is no material difference between the two, the bottle-glass being coarser and used for the common dark wine and beer-bottles, and flint-glass for everything that requires to be clearer and more polished in appearance; and in consequence the bottle-glass does not undergo such careful finishing as the other, but otherwise the mode of working in each is almost precisely similar. We will now take for our subject a wine-decanter to illustrate the one process which both kinds pass through.

When the metal is skimmed, the gatherer comes with a blow-pipe, which is a long iron tube. This he dips into the pot, and turning it round, gathers as much metal on the end as is required. If a large quantity is necessary he withdraws his blow-pipe and adds the metal on it to cool for a minute or so and again collects more hot metal over it, repeating the process until he has sufficient. He then takes out the pipe, and holding it in an upright position, with the metal at the lower end, allows the lump of clastic glass, which has the texture of very thick treacle, to stretch itself downward by its own weight until it is long enough for the purpose required, and having somewhat cooled and hardened, it is now fit to be worked into shape. The pipe is then handed to another man, by whom the glass is *marvered*—that is to say, rolled rapidly backward and forward on a smooth sheet of iron, by means of which it is made round all the way down and something the shape of the article to be produced. It is then again held in the furnace for a few minutes in order to revive the heat and so soften the metal, which is getting harder and harder when exposed to the air, and the blowing is proceeded with in the following manner:

The blower applies his mouth to that end of the pipe which he has been holding and blows down it, the air from his lungs passing down inside the pipe, and, working its way into the glass at the other end until it reaches the centre, forces the whole mass outward, and by degrees forms a hollow cavity in the middle, so that the more he blows the more the glass expands and the cavity becomes larger until it has nearly reached the size required. The glass is then put into a mold.

This consists of a block of wood or metal hollowed out inside into the shape of a decanter and made in two pieces, which open out down the middle to permit of the glass being placed between them. They are then tightly closed together, the pipe entering the mold through an opening at the top. The man again blows down, forcing the glass into every crevice and corner of the shape, and in this way the precise shape of the mold is obtained.

We must here tell you that a mold is not absolutely necessary in the manufacture of a bottle or decanter, as it may be blown into shape by the skill of the workman, the latter process being much more usual, as it produces a better quality of glass than the molding does. When the mold is again opened we find the body of the decanter completely formed, but the neck is in a very rough state, as it has been that part attached to the end of the pipe.

In order to work upon this we require to set it free and to hold the decanter from the other end.

This is accomplished in a very simple manner. A boy dips a small iron rod called a pontil into the pot of hot metal and so gathers a small drop of it, which he applies to the bottom of the decanter, and the soft metal readily adhering to the glass the latter is firmly attached to the pontil. The man at the other end of the decanter wets the neck where it joins the pipe, by which means he suddenly cools the glass at that spot, and with a gentle rap with the hand it breaks off smartly and so is disengaged from the blow-tube altogether. He then receives the pontil from the boy, and taking the decanter to a kind of stool with arms, something like an easy-chair, he places the neck on one of the arms and twirls the pontil rapidly to and fro between each other, with one hand, so making the decanter revolve very rapidly. In the other hand he holds an instrument like a pair of wooden sugar-tongs, with which he can press together any part of the neck, and so smooth it all round or make it smaller in one place than another, and with the help of other instruments he may bring it to any size or shape. When the form of the decanter is perfect, the boy, holding the neck by a two-pronged fork, disengages the pontil from the glass in the same way as the man did with the blow-pipe, and carries the decanter to the annealing oven.

This is a large brick oven at some distance from the furnace, and in it articles which have just been finished are placed to shelves, where the ware numbers and remain there for several hours, the object of this being to keep the glass warm for some time, as if it cooled too suddenly it would be more likely to break.

(To be continued.)

INVENTIVE BEN;

Or,

How a Boy Became a Jack-of-all-Trades and Master, Too.

BY COMMODORE AH-LOOK.

CHAPTER XLVI.

IN WHICH THATCHER LEARNS MORE OF WHAT PEOPLE THINK ABOUT HIM.

THE train that carried Inventive Ben away from Grainger was filled with farmers and their families, and the young man was compelled to listen to the somewhat uncomplimentary remarks they passed upon his invention.

"La, pa!" exclaimed a gawky-looking girl, who was on the row of seats before him, "wasn't it fun to see that snip of a fellow striking fancy attitudes as the reaper rushed over the ground? When he kissed his hand to me I felt like slapping his face."

"It was a deal more comical to see the great stupid tumble off," observed her sister. "I thought that I should die dead a-laffin'."

"Gals," remarked their father, a tall, hickory-faced, gray-haired man, "the reaper was all right, and worked splendidly. It was the mowin' that caused the mischief, but I heard Professor MacNab say he could fix it. Folks in the fair told me that the young fellow who invented the engine was too good to listen to advice. Anyhow, you don't catch me using a kerosene-machine on my place. Nobody but a greeny would have thought of making such an apparatus."

Thatcher's ears tingled as he listened to the foregoing, and he thought to himself:

"Am I what they say—conceited, stuck-up, proud, and all that? I begin to think there is some truth in it. I'm only a big boy, after all. Well, guess I'll try farming."

At the first stopping-place he rose from his seat, and approaching the young women, inquired if he could procure any refreshment for them, their parent having gone off and left the damsels to look after themselves.

"We remain here forty minutes," he said, "and I shall be pleased to get you anything you want."

The elder girl glanced at him suspiciously, and replied:

"We're big enough to look after ourselves, mister, and don't want anything to do with confidence-operators."

"Indeed, ladies, you are mistaken in me," he politely responded.

"Don't you see, Sal," whispered the younger miss, "he's one of the brakemen. Suppose we let him get our lunch for us? We needn't pay till he brings it, and if he tries to cheat we can hit him with the umbrella."

Thatcher listened to all this, but pretended not to hear it, and when the giggling females had given him their orders, left the car, thinking:

"It's rough on me, who have always been so much admired. First, I've given me a bit of her mind, and now I've got to put up with the sauce of these corn-crackers. Perhaps it's just as well to know what folks think about you. These girls will be astonished when they learn who I am."

"Hello!" snapped the female who presided at the depot refreshment-table; "what do you want?"

"Oh, you needn't look at me like that," chuckled Ben. "I ain't going to steal anything. I want two cups of coffee, four slices of pie, assorted, and two sandwiches."

"Eighty cents," she said, holding out her hand for the money.

Ben tossed her a dollar bill, and piling the articles on a couple of plates, carried them to the car, where he handed them to his fellow-passengers.

"Oh, mister," exclaimed the younger of the two, as she opened her sandwich and smelt its contents, "I can't eat smoked hog; it always makes me bilious. You must take this back and tell them to give me some lard."

"Yes," mumbled the other girl, who had already commenced eating hers. You can take this, too, young fellow."

"Certainly," he said, being determined to carry out the joke.

So, on receiving the articles, he quitted the car and leaped on to the platform, where he beheld a half-starved-looking boy, to whom he handed the food, observing:

"Eat 'em up, my son, and don't mind what these women say to you."

"Oh, Sal," cried the younger of the ladies, "that fellow has been and given our sandwiches to yonder child." With which she raised the window and shrieked, "You drop them, will you? Them's ourn."

The small boy's eyes twinkled, but his mouth worked harder than ever, and as he worried down the last morsel, he rudely placed the tip of his left thumb to against the end of his turned-up nose, while with his right fist he made a circular motion, expressive of derision, having accomplished which he whistled "Johnny Newcomb," and wound up his exhibition by dancing a sort of hornpipe; as he did so, the indignant girls beheld Thatcher returning with two more sandwiches.

"See here, young man," pouted Sally; "what do you mean by giving our food to that nasty critter? Go and slap him for us, will you?"

"Oh, leave him alone, poor boy," good-humoredly returned Ben. "You needn't pay for them; it's my treat."

This ended the controversy, and receiving back the plates, he returned them to the lunch-counter, neither of the girls asking him how much he had expended for them.

"Look here, sister," whispered the elder of the pair, "he ain't a brakeman; he's a city spark, and if we hold our tongues we shall beat him out of this lot."

At the expiration of the forty minutes, Thatcher rejoined them and politely inquired:

"I hope your lunch was satisfactory to you, young ladies?"

"Minerva," whispered the elder girl to her sister, "he's going to make us pony up. I do declare I've only ten cents left in my purse."

"You haven't!" sharply responded the other, in a voice perfectly audible to Ben. "I thought you had two dollars, sir?"

"I spent it all in peanuts and candy," trotted Sally. "Guess we shall have to borrow of pa."

The young man leaned foward in his seat, so as to bring his head between them, and quietly remarked:

"Ladies, you have nothing to pay. I am Mr. Benjamin Thatcher, the inventor of the kerosene motor."

"La!" ejaculated Sally, turning, grinning in his face, and speaking loudly enough to be heard all over the car. "I thought you was awful green. Let's shake hands with you, Mister; let's shake hands."

Ben became scarlet in the face as she wrung the tips of his fingers, and did his best to appear delighted, but it was tough work, for he could see that every one was smiling at him.

"I thought I should die dead a-laffin," once more giggled Minerva, grasping his disengaged hand. "So you're the little fellow who tumbled into the mud, are you? Well, do tell, where was you raised? You looked dreadful silly when you stood up and tried to strike attitudes."

The young inventor wished himself at the bottom of the sea, and when he was released, seized his carpet-bag and rifle and quitted the car, thinking to himself, as he took a seat in the rear vehicle:

"What a confounded donkey I was to go and blow to those girls! Guess I won't try farming now. I begin to see that Fanny was right. People don't put so much value on my inventions as I do. Guess I'll get out at the next stopping-place, and, in the future, will be more modest about my accomplishments."

"Creektown!" shouted the brakeman, throwing open the door of the car.

Thatcher stepped upon the platform, and hooking his stick in the handle of his bag, started for what looked like a good-sized city, and in ten minutes arrived on its busiest street.

"Guess this place will do me," he thought. "Let me see, which store shall I apply at? I reckon I'll wait until to-morrow."

"Want a boarding-house, young man?" inquired a seedily dressed person. "I can take you to a nice place."

"Thank you," responded Thatcher; "I do."

His conductor led him to a neat-looking house, and, on quitting him, said:

"The lady who keeps that is very particular who she boards, so please mention the name of Mr. Pittman."

Ben found the accommodation good and the house as neat as a new pin, so he told her who had recommended him, whereupon the lady smiled and said:

"Poor Mr. Pittman! I knew him when he was well off: now see what he is reduced to."

"I suppose drink did it!" inquired her lodger.

"No," she sighed. "It was worse than that. He was an inventor, and that ruined him," adding, naively, "Will you be kind enough to tell me what business you follow?"

For a moment or two her boarder did not reply, then noticing a sign on a factory over the way, he blurted out:

"I'm going to be a carver and gilder."

"If you want work," she said, "I'd advise you to go to Newcross & Steel's. they've got a big job on hand and are short of operators."

The next morning he presented himself at the shop, and was referred to Mr. Steel, who, after questioning Ben, engaged him to assist in

CHAPTER XLVII.

BEN TRIES A NEW WAY TO RESTORE AN OLD PAINTING.

THE business of carving and gilding proved to be very pleasant to Inventive Ben, who, being of a mechanical turn of mind, rapidly acquired both branches of the trade, and so pleased his employers that they promoted him to the finishing department, where he learned to frame pictures and mirrors.

Among the customers of the firm were several persons who possessed valuable collections of paintings, one of the gentlemen being the mayor, Colonel Widdicombe.

"Thatcher," said Mr. Steel, one afternoon, "you go down to his honor's and see what he wants us to do. He has written me about a picture that he has lately purchased, which he believes to be a genuine Rubens. Just stop in and ask him about it."

Away went Ben, and on reaching the mayor's house he was shown into the library, where he found the official admiring an oil-painting.

"Good-afternoon, young man," exclaimed the old gentleman, pointing to a portrait that could be dimly seen through the dirt covering the picture. "Do you known anything of the Old Masters?"

There was one thing about Inventive Ben, he never cared to admit his ignorance until he had ascertained that his questioner was wiser than himself; so, putting a bold face on it, he coolly answered:

"Certainly I do, your honor."

"What were their names?" blandly inquired the other.

"Let me see," answered Thatcher, screwing up one eye and regarding the painting with a critical air. "There was Matthew, Mark, Luke and John."

"Bless me!" exclaimed the mayor. "You in the picture business and don't know better than that!"

"Bet you a dollar I'm right," was the confident response, as the young man produced a pamphlet from his pocket, and, opening it, pointed to a memorandum which he read, as follows, "Portrait of St. Joseph, painted by St. Luke."

The mayor scratched his chin reflectively, and, after examining the description, said:

"Upon my word you are right; but how about the other three?"

"Oh, they all did a little in that way," answered his visitor. "Now, what do you want done with this picture?"

"I like to have it cleaned," said the gentleman. "Your folks ask so much money for such a job, I fear I cannot afford it. Do you know anything about the matter?"

Thatcher had often been employed to remove the varnish from paintings, but had worked under the direction of one of the firm; so, believing he knew all about it, he replied:

"I can fix it for you, colonel, and you can send it round to our place and have it framed."

"You won't spoil it, will you?" demanded the mayor. "If this should prove to be what I think, a painting by Peter Paul Rubens, it will be worth twenty thousand dollars."

"Have you got any warm water handy?" said Ben, taking off his coat and rolling up his shirt-sleeves. "All this wants is a little castile soap and a gentle wash down, when the dirt will come off, leaving the portrait as fresh as the day it was painted."

The gentleman led the way to his bath-room, and screwing a short hose and sprinkler to the warm water faucet, showed Thatcher where he could find soap and a sponge; having done which he seated himself and watched the operation.

Ben carefully removed the picture from its dilapidated frame, made a lather on the sponge, and after working it well into the grimy surface of the painting, set the latter upright in the bath, and bidding the colonel approach, turned on a gentle stream of tepid water, gradually as the portrait became freed from its dirty covering:

"There, see how beautifully it shows up. Newcross & Steel couldn't do it better than that."

"I really believe it is a Rubens," breathed the delighted old gentleman. "Young man, you are a genius. What is your name?"

The operator smiled, and, turning the water on at full power, said:

"I don't mind confiding in you, my name is Thatcher. I am the person who has made so many inventions, although I never before tried my hand at cleaning a picture like this. It's splendid, ain't it?"

Unfortunately for the speaker the water in the faucet grew hotter and hotter; but he did not notice this until the paint began to blister and come off in big patches, when, in attempting to fish the canvas out of the bath, he scalded his fingers and let it drop upon its face.

"Oh, my goodness! what have you done?" almost shrieked the mayor. "You rascal, what have you done?"

"Done?" moaned Ben, as he greased his digits. "Why didn't you tell me that water was boiling-hot?"

"You are an impostor!" savagely replied the owner of the picture. "Just take it out and see how much it is damaged. A lot you know about the business."

Thatcher looked round him, and seeing a small iron lifter, hooked up the half-cooked canvas, and, turning it toward the unhappy connoisseur, said:

"The fellow who sold this to you was a swindler. It's nothing but a chromo of Daniel Webster, mounted on canvas and colored to make it look old."

"Get out of my sight, you wretch!" shouted the mayor. "How dare you call my priceless Old Master a chromo!"

"I wish I hadn't biled it so much," murmured Ben, as he took his way back to his employers. "The fact is, I must not in future attempt things I don't know anything about. I believe it was a chromo, after all.

"What did his honor want?" inquired Mr. Steel, when the young man reached the factory.

Ben described his experience in humorously as he could, quite to the partners looked grave, and, after he had concluded his narration, pointedly informed him that they had no further use for his services.

Thatcher quitted the workshop with anything but a feeling of satisfaction, and, sauntering up the street, walked on until he came to the outskirts of the city, where he beheld a big building surrounded by a high fence, bearing this sign:

"Benjamin Thatcher's Shoe-peg and Match Factory."

"I want to know," he murmured, as he read the notice—"I wonder whether the man is any relation to me! Guess I'll pay him a visit."

"What do you want to see Mr. Thatcher for?" inquired the janitor at the gate; pointing to a printed notice, "There's no admission here except on business."

"I'm on business," answered Ben. "You just go and tell him that his affectionate nephew wants to see him."

The man turned in his seat and whistled into a speaking-tube, when, in response to his summons, came the query:

"Who does he say he is? I've got no relatives. He's an impostor."

"You had better go, young fellow," exclaimed the janitor, glancing at his visitor. "Mr. Thatcher isn't one to be gammoned, I tell you."

"I don't want to gammon him," calmly answered Ben, producing a card from his pocket. "Just you take this in, and say that I must be his nephew, and that I'm not the sort of person to stand any fooling. Now, away you go, old fellow; I'm burning to see my celebrated uncle. I've used his matches for a good many years, but never until now was aware I was named for him."

The man flatly refused to accept the card, and after communicating with his employer, seized Ben by the collar, and what is termed, shot him off the premises.

"You'll repent this, mister," remarked the inventor, as he picked himself up. "Just wait till I make it up with my uncle."

The last man had retired inside the gate Thatcher seated himself under a tree, and watched for the appearance of some one from the premises, and in a few moments saw a little girl, who had been in the works to carry her father's supper, many of the operatives remaining in the building all night.

"Sis," he cried, as she halted, as though afraid to pass him, "can you tell me what sort of a looking man the boss is? Is he anything like me?"

"Yes," was her timid response. "He's dreadful homely, and he stopped two dollars out of my father's pay last week. Here he comes; I know his voice, he always talks so loud."

The child hurried away, and presently a tall, hard-featured man, dressed in shabby clothes, emerged from the gate and approached the watcher as though unconscious of his presence.

"I guess that's my relative," chuckled Ben, rising, and advancing with extended hand. "Hello, uncle! How are you? I think it is real mean of you to deny your relationship. I'm your nephew, Benjamin Thatcher!"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

BENJAMIN THATCHER, THE MANUFACTURER.

THE manufacturer glanced at Ben and scrutinized every line of his face, after doing which he remarked:

"Can it be possible that you are the son of my brother. What was your mother's maiden name?"

"Hannah Wilkins," was the quiet response. "I'm the real Simon Pure. Father and mother died when I was a child, and Uncle John took charge of me. You really must be my relative, and may as well take it good-humoredly."

"Boy," answered the other, "I always thought my brother had no family. Come home with me to supper, and we will talk the matter over."

"With pleasure," said Ben. "But before I go any further I wish you to know that I don't want any favors of you."

"That's said like a true Thatcher," observed the other. "Shake hands, my lad. Ever since I have become prosperous I have been pestered by a crowd of relatives, who were all anxious to get into my pocket. You are the first one I've come across who didn't want something of me."

Ben grasped the proffered hand, and, as he shook it, said:

"Guess you'll find, when you understand me better, that I shall help you. Do you know that I'm a celebrated inventor? I think it's a very fortunate thing I've come to-day, for this afternoon, I'm saying which, he described how he had restored the oil-painting, the recital causing the manufacturer to roar with laughter.

"I'm acquainted with the old donkey," he said. "He thinks he is posted about pictures, when the fact is, he can scarcely tell an oil-painting from a water-color. It's worth a hundred dollars to know what you've told me."

"I ain't above taking the money," chuckled Ben. "I tell you it was fun to see him wring his hands when the chromo washed off."

His companion did not offer to present him with the sum, so Ben wisely let the matter slip, and upon arriving at their destination, followed his newly-found relative into a parlor, and soon satisfied him that he was not an impostor, though he was smart enough not to tell him of any of his failures in invention.

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"Benjamin," remarked the manufacturer, "I shall, as a matter of precaution, write to your uncle and some people in Scrub Oak—not that I discredit your story, but wish to be perfectly satisfied. If your statement is confirmed, I will take you into my employment, and, later on, give you a share of the business. Now, come and have a bit supper with me, then return to your lodging, and come to the works to-morrow just as any other person would do; at the same time, I warn you not to claim any relationship with me until you have my permission."

"You are quite right, sir," said Ben. "The world is full of dead-beats, and I'm just as anxious as you are not to make any mistake in this matter."

This speech was so comically delivered that the manufacturer could not avoid laughing at him and saying:

"It strikes me, young man, you have a pretty good opinion of yourself. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose in proving I'm your uncle."

"I don't quite see that," drawled the other. "I'll allow you have got money, but you might turn out to be different from what I think. I tell you I'm awful particular about my relations."

"How will you learn that I'm all right," demanded the gentleman, leading the way to the supper-table.

"I shall do the same as you propose," was the cool rejoinder. "I've got a good character, and it's worth a lot to me, so I mean to make strict inquiries about yours."

"Quite correct, my boy," said Mr. Thatcher. "Now, what can I help you to—some of this smoked sausage?"

Ben nodded, and soon was busily engaged devouring the good things which his host piled upon his plate.

He had done well in holding his own with his newly-found relative, who, being a self-made man, admired independence of character.

When the meal was over they repaired to a gorgeously furnished room, and the manufacturer, lighting his pipe, bade his guest tell him his history.

At first Thatcher hung fire a little, feeling a doubt about such episodes in his career as those relating to his school tricks and dead failures; however, his uncle laughed so heartily at his escapades that he made a clean breast of it, winding up with:

"I believe, after all, that I was born to be an inventor, and if you take me into your business we shall beat all the shoe-peg and lucifer match-makers in creation."

"Good night," smilingly remarked his uncle. "You go home; and to-morrow I'll show you round the works and explain the machinery. I don't think you'll find much chance to improve upon it."

Punctually at six o'clock the next morning Ben presented himself at the works, and when Mr. Thatcher made his appearance, was conducted by him into the first floor, where fifty circular-saws were hard at work slicing pine timber into veneers.

"This," said his conductor, "is the first process. Now we will ascend to the next floor and see the thin strips made into matches."

Up they went, and, upon entering the apartment, saw the veneers emerge from a shoot and piled in a heap, from which they were fed, or rather insinuated, was distributed to feed a number of machines, by means of which it was cut into articles resembling wooden combs.

"I invented this," proudly observed the manufacturer. "The old style of match used to be made in long, thin lengths and cross-cut by hand, but my patent does away with all waste and turns out the article ten times as quickly as the original process."

"It's a real smart invention," said Ben, who watched the working very narrowly; "though I think I could design an attachment that would simultaneously separate the rows and arrange them in the dipping forms."

"All in good time," said his conductor. "Now come down into the chemical department. "I want you to see every stage a match has to pass through."

They descended to the ground floor, and, emerging from the building, proceeded to some low sheds situated several hundred yards from the main factory.

"Po-weugh!" murmured Ben. "What a horrid smell!"

The manufacturer opened a door leading into the nearest shop, and, regardless of the dense vapor, bade his companion follow him.

"You'll observe," shouted Mr. Thatcher, "that the undipped matches come up through a hatchway on the right, turn as they emerge into the shed, and are ranged tip downward on these frames;" saying which, he pointed to some long iron racks suspended over shallow troughs in which melted sulphur was gently bubbling.

"I see," answered Ben, "there are tunnels between this place and the main factory, and the unprepared articles are brought here underground. I suppose the reason for that is, if this place catches fire it may not extend to the factory?"

"Yes," nodded the gentleman, continuing his description. "As soon as the rack becomes full it sinks by its own weight until the match-points are submerged in the sulphur, then, by raising this lever, the frames are lifted, carried on to a cooling chamber, and from thence to another shallow vat containing the phosphorus, which colors the points and completes the process."

As he spoke Mr. Thatcher led the way through the apartments, and Ben saw millions of matches receive the finishing touch and disappear into the mouth of the second tunnel.

When this department was inspected they quitted the highly-perfumed building, recrossed the open space, and entered the factory, where the young man beheld a lively operation, by means of which each frame of matches was raised to the packing room, at the top of the works.

Mr. Thatcher bade him step into an elevator, and in a brief space of time they emerged among a crowd of girls, who were busily engaged in wrapping the matches in paper, after which the articles were lowered to the floor below, packed in gross boxes, cased, and sent to a warehouse in New York.

"Now, Benjamin," remarked his guide, "in what department would you like to work?"

"The cutting," responded our young friend, and within ten minutes he was feeding one of the machines.

Thatcher kept at it steadily for over a week, at the end of which time he was summoned to the counting-room, where he found his uncle and aunt from Scrub Oak, on seeing whom he exclaimed:

"I want to know! How did you come here?"

"Benjamin," said Mr. Thatcher, extending his hand, "I'm satisfied with you."

"Good enough!" nodded our hero. "I'm ready to go into partnership right away. I'm perfectly satisfied with you."

CHAPTER XLIX.

A PERFECT MATCH.

MR. THATCHER, Senior, treated Mr. Wilkins and his wife very kindly, and that evening they supped with him and Ben, and talked over the past.

"Our nephew has already invented several improvements upon my machines," observed the manufacturer. "Now, if he only keeps steady, I will give him charge of the shoe-peg factory at Pine Woods."

"I wondered where you made them pegs," laughingly remarked Ben. "I know it says on your shingle 'Shoe-peg and match factory,' but I never saw any of the first-named articles about the place."

"Why didn't you ask, then?" demanded his new relative.

Ben winked at his Uncle John, and assuming his old-time drawl, replied:

"It warn't any of my business."

"That is good!" cried Mr. Thatcher. "I like that. A young man who can mind his own affairs is a treasure. I've made my fortune by not poking my nose into other folks' concerns. To-morrow I will take you to Pine Woods and give you an insight into peg-making."

Ben thanked him, and they spent a pleasant evening discussing the future, never heeding how the time flew until, glancing at the clock, Mrs. Wilkins exclaimed:

"Massy me, it's past twelve!"

"Nephew," said his uncle, giving him a pass-key, "I suppose you would like to see our visitors home. When you return here, mind and secure the front door."

"Certainly, sir," was the response. "Come, aunt; I've a lot to talk to you about."

When they arrived at the hotel, Uncle John went off to have a smoke, leaving his wife and Ben in the deserted parlor.

"You haven't told me any news from Scrub Oak," nervously remarked Thatcher. "Who have they got for teacher at the school?"

"Miss Fanny Lee," significantly returned the old lady, "and people say that Dr. Munson is very attentive in that quarter."

"I don't believe it," cried Ben. "She's by far too sensible a girl to care for a chuckle-head like the doctor. He's old enough to be her father."

"Oh, he's improved of late, and is very well off," said his aunt. "I suppose Fan can do as she likes; I dont see it concerns you."

"Not at all," he snapped, picking up his hat and starting for the door. Fanny Lee don't think anything of me. I can't see why you mentioned her name; I didn't inquire after her; she's about the last person in the world I should ask about. Good-night, aunt."

When he had departed Mrs. Wilkins leaned back and laughed until her sides ached; then rising, went to her room, murmuring:

"Of course Ben don't care for Fan Lee; certainly not!"

The next morning, when Thatcher saw his relations off, he remarked:

"You can tell my friends in Scrub Oak I've met with a rich relation, but that it hasn't made me proud. In fact, you can say I don't think so much of myself as I used to do, and am going to work for what I get."

He had been awake all night musing over his life, and had determined to conquer his foolish vanity.

"Nephew," said his uncle Thatcher, when they met at breakfast, "you yesterday expressed your readiness to go into partnership with me. I may as well tell you that you will have to wait my pleasure in the matter."

"Certainly," was Ben's calm rejoinder. "I never imagined otherwise."

"Another thing I wish plainly understood," continued the old man. "On no account, even if I take you into partnership, will I change my sign to Thatcher and Thatcher."

"You would be very foolish to do so," responded his nephew; "all I want is your confidence and permission to improve upon the machinery now used in your factory."

His relative told him to do as he pleased with regard to improvements, and when the meal was over they started for Pine Woods.

The peg-manufactory proved to be a mere shed, covering the steam-engine and cutter, by which logs were reduced to those little pieces of wood used in the shoe-trade, the plant having to be moved from time to time as the forest was cleared.

It did not take Ben long to learn the trade, but before he could make any changes in the apparatus his uncle decided to give up the business, so the young man was placed in charge of the match-factory.

One day when he was going his rounds he noticed a number of new hands working in the dipping sheds, and on inquiring what had become of the old employés, the foreman said:

"Why, they are most all in the hospital, sir. The fumes of the chemicals are so poisonous that they rot the flesh and bones, and nobody engaged in this business ever lives to be old. Can't you, who have invented so many things, find a way of preventing this?"

"I'll try," was Ben's answer.

Half an hour afterward he met his uncle, who confirmed the man's statement, but remarked:

"It ain't any good, nephew. Match-making is unhealthy work, and nobody regrets it more than I do. The chemists have tried all manner of substances, and have had to fall back upon sulphur and phosphorus, every other combination being too dangerous and expensive."

"Guess I'll attempt it, anyhow," thought the young inventor. "If I succeed it will be a big thing for me in every way."

From that hour he devoted all his spare time to his new idea, and in six months was enabled to take out a patent for "Thatcher's Non-poisonous Perfect Match."

When he received his papers he told his uncle what he had done, and after the old gentleman had examined the specification and tested a box of the articles, he calmly observed:

"Yes, nephew, it's all you claim—a perfect match. You have my permission to convert our present machinery so as to make these things, and I will privately take you as my partner."

Ben was delighted with his good fortune, which he hastened to communicate to his relatives in Scrub Oak; but while Munson, Padmore, Brightman, and many of his acquaintances wrote him congratulatory letters, he never heard from one person whose good opinion he valued more than all the rest, nor did he care to pay a visit to his birthplace.

Two years passed, during which time the old factory was leveled to the ground and a handsome stone building erected in its stead. Meanwhile Thatcher had invented a great number of useful articles, though none of them had proved so valuable as his safety match, which was exported to all parts of the world.

True to his resolve, Ben never murmured at his name not appearing in the business or complained because his uncle's portrait was used as a trade-mark on the matches, the fact being, he had conquered his vanity.

One day, when he was thinking of his old friend, Fanny Lee, and wondering whether she really cared for such a soft head as Munson, he remembered the dilapidated state of the schoolhouse and his misery when compelled to sit in the draffy structure, so, writing a check for several thousand dollars, he inclosed it to the selectmen with the following note:

"Creektown, September 18th, 18—.

"GENTLEMEN—If this amount is not sufficient to build and furnish a first-class schoolhouse for Scrub Oak, you may draw for any reasonable balance required on yours truly, BENJAMIN THATCHER."

It is scarcely necessary to state that the money was accepted, and in due time the generous donor received this communication:

MICHAEL J. QUINN, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 30, WALCOTT STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

"Town Hall, Scrub Oak, June 23d, 18—.

"BENJAMIN THATCHER, Esq., Creektown.

"DEAR SIR.—The schoolhouse so generously donated by you to this town will be formally opened upon the anniversary of our National Independence, upon which occasion the citizens desire to make a public demonstration, expressive of their esteem for you, and wish me to ask if you will confer a still greater favor upon us by presiding at the exercises which will be held in the new building.

"Trusting that nothing will prevent your acceptance of this invitation, and wishing you every happiness, I remain, dear sir, yours most respectfully,

"D. MUNSON, Chairman of Committee."

Ben showed this to his uncle, and when the latter had agreed to accompany him, telegraphed the following reply:

"Dr. Munson, Scrub Oak.—I will be on hand upon the Fourth. Yours truly, INVENTIVE BEN."

CHAPTER I.

THE BEST MATCH OF ALL.

TRUE to its reputation, the glorious Fourth was a blazing hot day; spite of which, all Scrub Oak turned out to do honor to Inventive Ben.

Precisely at twelve o'clock the flag-decorated train thundered into the depot, and as nephew and uncle alighted upon the platform the cornet-band, led by Billy Saunders, played, "See the Conquering Hero Comes."

Space will not admit of our describing the meeting between the young man and Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins, or the intense enthusiasm displayed by folks all along the route, which culminated when the hero of the hour arrived in sight of the handsome building erected by his generosity.

He bore himself modestly, merrily replied to the many greetings, and upon reaching their destination assisted his uncle up the steps and introduced him to Fanny, who, since their last interview, had developed into a very beautiful woman.

Ben felt glad when this ordeal had been passed, though it made him somewhat uncomfortable to see Munson seat himself by the teacher and hand her a magnificent bouquet of flowers.

It did not take many moments to crowd the building, but thanks to the excellent ventilation, no one suffered from the heat.

When silence was obtained the three committeemen rose, and the doctor, acting as spokesman, requested Mr. Thatcher, Junior, would formally present his gift to the town; whereupon Ben addressed the meeting as follows:

"Friends and fellow-citizens—My heart is so full of conflicting emotions that I can scarcely find words for this occasion. Years and years ago, when I used to sit in the precious, rickety, drafty, tumble-down, rat-haunted old shanty which stood on this spot, I was at times so miserable that I detested both teacher, committee and teacher with a fervor almost amounting to hatred, and many of you may remember, I used to say"—here he resumed his old drawl—"if ever I make anything out of my inventions I'll buy Scrub Oak a new schoolhouse. Boys and girls, you have no doubt heard how I was boosted out of the old building, and of my vowing never to come back here unless I was specially invited, and of my various ups and downs in the world until, finally, I met this gentleman, who thought enough of his nephew to give him a chance, and who taught me how to make matches. But, my dear friends, as usual, I was chock full of invention, and in a short time proved to my relative that I could do something to improve his business, when, like a good man, he told me to go ahead, the result being a safety match, out of the profits of which this edifice has been paid for. Gentlemen of the Committee representing the citizens of Scrub Oak, I hereby present you with this building, furnished throughout with all the latest improvements, and, in so doing, express my regret that, when I was a scholar, I did not pay the proper respect due to your age and long service. In those days, boys and girls"—turning to the children—"I had a good share of self-conceit. However, I have tried to conquer that, and, in conclusion, advise you first to attend school regularly; secondly, to try and understand the instructions of the Committee, and, thirdly, to remember that you have the handsomest, smartest teacher in creation."

This speech was received with mingled outbursts of laughter and applause, at the conclusion of which Ben presented the children with a hundred dollars to be spent in fire-crackers, and when the minister, selectmen, and other leading personages had performed their part of the ceremony, a rush was made for a big tent on the common, where refreshments were distributed to all comers.

"Nephew," remarked the old manufacturer, as they stood apart from the fast-diminishing audience, "would you like to have our joint names, Thatcher & Thatcher, used in the business?"

"Certainly I should," quietly answered Thatcher, who was watching the teacher. "I can't tell you how proud it would make me."

"Ben," whispered his relative, indicating Fanny by a nod, "if you can secure such a wife as that girl I'll put your name on our shingle and make you my heir."

"I'll try," smilingly replied the other. "I don't know whether she'll accept me; anyhow, I'll do my level best to persuade her."

The worthy man did not make any further remark, but, joining the Wilkieses, quitted the building, and in a few moments its only occupants were the two young people.

Ben was burning to tell his old friend how sorry he felt at having unwittingly refused to see her when she called upon him at Grainger, and she was just as anxious to apologize for having presumed to give him advice.

For a while they shyly regarded one another, when, remembering their school-days, they smiled simultaneously, and he said:

"Fanny, what do you think of my safety-match?"

"It's perfect," she blushingly responded, as she took his proffered hand. "Oh, Ben, I'm so sorry that our friendship has come to an end!"

"An end!" he cried; "yes, as boy and girl; but now we can resume it as man and woman. I'm delighted that you approve of my safety-match, because I want to make another. Won't you help me?"

By that time he was standing close to her, and his arm was encircling her taper waist.

"Oh, Ben," she faltered, "I don't know anything about your business."

"Fan," he whispered, "you can soon learn. The next match I want to make is with you."

At this critical moment Doctor Munson peeped in at the open door, and, after gaping at the couple, mumbled:

"Miss Lee, can I escort you to the tent?"

The girl's eyes sparkled merrily, and her companion winked slyly, as, turning to the old committeeman, she replied:

"Thank you very kindly, doctor; *I have already accepted* Inventive Ben."

THE END.

Distinguished Scholars of Brooklyn (N. Y.) Schools.

MICHAEL J. QUINN,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 30, WALCOTT STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

MICHAEL J. QUINN is a bright and ambitious youth, who ranks very high in the studies of the first division of the first class of Grammar School No. 30, Walcott Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. He is neat in his attire, polite in his manners, and intelligent in conversation, so that, in all respects, he presents a worthy example for the imitation of his fellow-scholars and the youth generally. He was born in Brooklyn, N. Y., December 2d, 1863, making him fifteen years of age. He is the son of Jeremiah and Mary Quinn. When about seven years old he entered the lowest class of the Primary Department of No. 30, and he has been constantly in the school up to the present time. Following him from class to class it is found that he has been an attentive learner in both the lower and higher studies. Soon after getting into a class he was sure to push to the front of it, and as the studies have become more difficult his mind has shown the strength and expansion which were required to make him successful in them also. He is now making a per centage of ninety-eight. His teachers have a good word to say for him, and the Principal pronounced him a scholar of marked qualifications. Certainly the praise which is thus freely given to him must be a great satisfaction to him, and it should be a great incentive to him in the years before him.

KATIE F. MADDIGAN,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 30, WALCOTT STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

KATIE F. MADDIGAN is one of the most promising scholars ever presented in this column. She has surprised every teacher who has taught her by her aptness in study, and her present advanced position is far beyond what is usual for a girl of her age. She is now in the fourth grammar class of Grammar School No. 30, Walcott Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., and became a member of the lowest class of the Primary Department when seven years of age. She is the daughter of Eugene and Katie Maddigan. She was born December 6th, 1868, and is, therefore, only a little over ten years of age. It is very striking to see her in the most prominent seat in the class, surrounded by girls who are much older and larger. She is a small, delicate-looking girl, with an intelligent face, and polite and modest manners. We were shown her record where she was given ninety-nine in spelling, one hundred in arithmetic, one hundred in geography and one hundred in penmanship. She is undoubtedly a remarkable little girl. They are very proud of her in the school, and, in fact, regard her as something of a prodigy. Her amiability endears her to every one, and we are sure that those of our young readers who cannot see or know her personally will be pleased to see her portrait and know her bright career.

KATIE F. MADDIGAN, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 30, WALCOTT STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

ROY, THE RANGER.

A Tale of the Mexican War.

[Our story is of stirring times, when gallant men were mustering to bear the Stars and Stripes at the head of our armies across the frontier. The boys who panted then to rush to the field of glory are, many of them, now gray-headed men; but the adventures of those days still make them feel their youth return.]

CHAPTER IV.

DOOMED TO DEATH.

IT may be readily imagined that Roy's astonishment at meeting Zella Bellingham in such a place and under such circumstances was unbounded.

"You here?" he cried.

"It surprises you, does it not?" she returned, still clinging fondly to him.

"Why are you here?"

"I came in search of you."

Roy's surprise increased.

"In search of me?" he cried. "But why should you thus endanger yourself?"

"Hush! this is no place for an explanation. You have fallen into the power of unscrupulous wretches; but have a good heart, for I can save you."

These words she whispered in his ear.

"You?" rejoined Roy, in astonishment. "By what means?"

"Hush!" she again cautioned him. "Question me not—you will see."

She released Roy from the clinging embrace in which she had held him during these whispered and hurried words.

"Here's a go!" said Tom Meade, his countenance plainly expressing the astonishment of his mind. "What in the world ever brought Mrs. Bellingham here?"

"She did not tell me," answered Roy; "and I am at as much of a loss to understand it as you are."

A man in a gaudy uniform, whose appearance proclaimed him the leader of the bandits, now approached Zella.

He was a man of slight, supple figure, with a swarthy face, sharp-featured, with small, black eyes, long black hair, and a drooping black mustache.

There was a crafty look upon his features, and a cruel light in his restless eyes.

You could see at a glance that he was a man of ferocious instincts, cunning, treacherous, and pitiless.

This was Romano Falcon, who had already gained for himself the distinguishing title of THE BANDIT OF THE CHAPARRAL.

His band consisted of a motly crew of mixed nationalities, arrayed in all sorts of costumes, and without any regard to uniformity.

He himself wore the uniform of a Colonel of the Regiment of Tampico, which he had stolen from a Mexican supply train, for Falcon made war on his own countrymen as well as the "North Americans"—as General Taylor's army was designated—and plundered all straggling parties from either side with great impartiality.

Some twenty of his men were now gathered about him; but this could only have been a portion of his force.

Roy observed that the majority of the faces of these men denoted that they were not Mexicans.

There was here and there a black and a red face amongst them, but most were white, and their bushy beards and curly hair proclaimed English, Scotch, or Irish blood—anything, in short, but Mexican.

Two of them, and apparently officers, by the arms they wore, Roy was positive were from the States, and the larger of the two he took to be an Eastern man, like himself.

His attention was attracted toward these men by the pertinacity with which they stared at him.

"They think they have seen me somewhere before, I fancy," he told himself.

The lamps fastened against the wall, and freely supplied with oil, gave a flaring light to this strange scene; but the strangest figure in all that motley group was Zella Bellingham.

She was clad in a black velvet traveling suit, which was trimmed with bugles, and these glistening beads of glass glittered in the rays of light.

The dress fitted her to perfection and revealed the symmetry of her bust and waist.

Her long light curls floated down upon her shoulders, and were surmounted by a black velvet hat, ornamented with a long, drooping ostrich plume.

Her fair complexion was a shade paler than usual, and her large blue eyes gleamed with a restless, anxious look.

Never had Zella looked more beautiful than then, and Romano Falcon's face showed an appreciation of this erratic woman's beauty as he advanced to address her.

"He is a friend of yours," he said.

And he made a motion with his hand toward Roy.

"He is my son!" she answered, impressively.

He looked astonished.

"Impossible!" he cried. "You could not have a son as old as that."

She smiled at the implied compliment.

"Still he is my son," she rejoined.

Falcon shook his head.

"I cannot believe it," he responded. "There is not the slightest resemblance between you, either in form or feature."

INVENTIVE BEN.—"'GET OUT OF MY SIGHT, YOU WRETCH!' SHOUTED THE MAYOR. 'HOW DARE YOU CALL MY PRICELESS OLD MASTER A CHRONO!'"—SEE PAGE 150.

ROY, THE RANGER.—"'YOU SHALL DIE!' 'NO, NO!' SHRIEKED ZELIA. 'SILENCE, WOMAN! I COMMAND HERE!' EXCLAIMED FALCON, AUTHORITATIVELY. 'THESE ARE TWO OF THE WORST FOES OF MEXICO. THE TEXANS HAVE BROUGHT THIS WAR UPON US.'"

"True; I am only his stepmother—I was his father's wife."

"Ah! that's a different matter. He was born before you married his father."

"Yes."

"Of course! Why, he must be nearly as old as you are—he looks it, at all events."

Zelia sulked again, but she did not contradict the bandit.

"Let him and his comrade go free," she said.

The bandit shook his head.

"It is not our custom to release our prisoners," he replied. "This is a war of extermination we have entered upon. The invaders were warned what their fate would be if they dared to venture upon the sacred soil of Mexico!"

Romano Falcon pronounced these words grandiloquently. He always made a great show of his patriotism whenever he could find the opportunity.

"You must release him!" cried Zelia, imperatively. "I demand his liberation in the Padre's name."

"You cannot," he answered, and his manner denoted that he was nettled by the tone of authority she had assumed toward him. "Your safe conduct refers only to yourself, not to others."

Zelia started tremulously. She began to fear that she could not save Roy from the power of this remorseless man. With her keen perception, she had gauged his character, and sounded the depths of his petty, cruel mind.

He was one of those human hyenas that war always produces, giving them the opportunity to glut their thirst for blood and rapine.

She cast a swift glance over the faces of his men, who stood at a respectful distance, leaning upon their guns, impassive spectators of the scene, and like Roy, she observed the white faces prevailing amongst them, and deemed them deserters from General Taylor's army, and so worse miscreants than the native Mexicans and Indians.

Then her eyes wandered to Roy and Tom, standing side by side, with their hands tied behind them, for they had been thus bound after having been deprived of their arms.

She took heart as her eyes rested upon Roy's hard and resolute face, and a world of tenderness shone in their blue depths as she murmured to herself:

"I must save him!—and I will—I will!"

Romano Falcon also turned his attention to the two young rangers.

"I will interrogate the prisoners!" he said, pompously. "Of what country are you?"

"North America, as you call it here," answered Roy.

"What regiment?" pursued Falcon.

"None."

"How can that be?"

"We are volunteers from Texas, and belong to Captain Walker's company."

"First and second lieutenant," added Tom, rather consequentially, as if proud of his rank.

Falcon's brow lowered ominously.

"Texan rangers?" he cried.

"Yes."

"You shall die!"

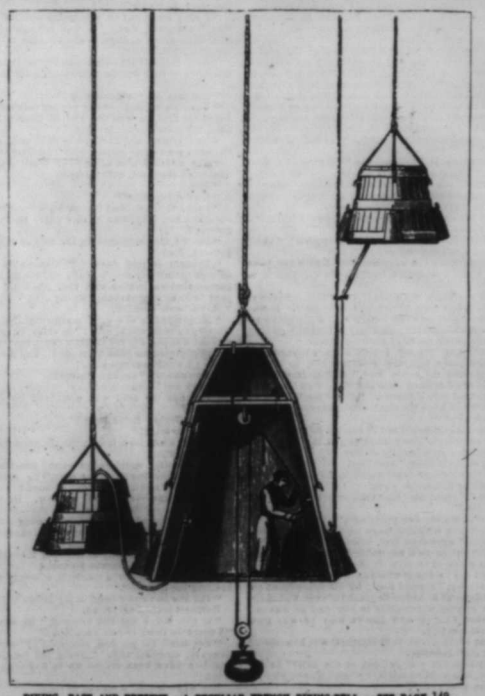
"No, no!" shrieked Zelia.

"Silence, woman! I command here!" exclaimed Falcon, authoritatively. "These are two of the worst foes of Mexico. The Texans have brought this war upon us. They cast off their allegiance to our sacred country, and are a race of vile renegades, who, when captured in arms against us, can expect nothing but death."

"We expect the treatment allotted to prisoners of war by all civilized nations," said Roy. "Had we fallen into the hands of unreasoning savages we should not wonder at any excess of barbarity."

"Be careful of what you do!" added Tom Meade; "we belong to a nation that can avenge us."

Falcon shrugged his shoulders contemptuously.



DIVING, PAST AND PRESENT.—A PECULIAR FRENCH DIVING-BELL.—SEE PAGE 149.

"I care not for your nation," he rejoined. "I put to death all North Americans who fall into my hands. *My motto is, No quarter; death to all!* I see no reason why I should make any exception in your favor."

"I will show you a reason," cried Zelia. "This young gentleman is Leroy Bellingham, the scion of one of the proudest families in Boston."

"Boston! where's that?" demanded Falcon, indifferently.

"Never heard of Boston—well, he don't know much," muttered Tom Meade.

The two bandits, who stood together and watched Roy with so much interest, appeared to be of the same opinion.

They were both men past the middle age of life—stalwart, weather-beaten, and with villain strongly marked on their coarse features.

There was a striking difference between the two, however, one being a head the taller, and much stouter than his companion. This one had long iron-gray hair, and a grizzly beard, whilst the other's hair and beard were red, or rather of a brick-dust color.

"The captain don't know where Boston is," said the red-haired man, in a low tone, to his companion.

"Of course he don't," returned the other; "these Mexican Greasers are ignorant cusses, anyway. All the captain knows or cares about is to rob and kill."

From these muttered words it would appear that Falcon's subordinates did not have a very high opinion of their leader.

There is always more or less dissatisfaction among lawless bands, and only a firm will and strong hand can hold such reckless spirits in check.

Zelia explained the position of Boston to the bandit captain, and gave him an idea of its wealth and importance in the United States.

"I will agree to pay you a ransom for this young officer's release," she said, in conclusion.

This proposal appeared to take effect upon Romano Falcon's mind.

"A ransom? Hum!" he cried. "For one, or both?"

"This one. I care nothing for the other."

"I will not accept my freedom unless Tom goes with me!" exclaimed Roy, quickly. "Nor do I authorize you to make terms for me, Mrs. Bellingham."

The two bandits started at the sound of the name, as if it fell upon their ears with a familiar sound.

"Why, that was the name of the man that night, at the old mill—don't you remember, Ned?" whispered the tall one to his companion, and in quite a degree of agitation.

"Sure I do, Tom!" responded the other, equally agitated. "I thought the face looked like one I'd seen somewhere before. But it can't be him. He was killed and burnt."

"But this might be his son."

"Sure the boy was killed, too?"

"I thought so at the time, but I'm not so sure of it now," replied Tom Hartnett, shaking his head in a doubtful manner.

While these men thus conversed together, Zelia had gone to Roy, and laying her hand caressingly upon his shoulder, had said to him:

"Roy, I must free you from the power of this man if it costs me every cent I have in the world."

"Why should you do that?" answered Roy, somewhat coldly.

The repellent feeling which he had experienced for this fascinating woman in his boyhood had returned to his mind, and strengthened as he grew to manhood.

Something in his nature warned him against this woman, despite all the efforts she made to gain his favor.

This feeling, which he could neither explain nor account for, bewildered him, and made him distant to the woman who held toward him the singular relationship of stepmother and aunt.

He had never been able to understand the motive that had led her to marry his father's half-brother, Onslow Bellingham.

He often recurred to Onslow's strange death in the snowy wood that wintry day, and his wild mutterings, but they had not conveyed any revelation of that dread tragedy of the past to his mind.

The man who could have lifted the vail that time had hung over the mystery, Richard Eaton, his lawyer-guardian, did not do so.

His lips were sealed. The promise he had given to Zelia Bellingham was sacredly observed.

"So long as you keep faith with me, I will keep faith with you," he had told her.

"I shall keep faith with you for my own sake," she had answered. "If you know what my feelings were toward Roy you would not doubt me."

He did not doubt her, and he gave her that assurance, though he was far from imagining her feelings toward the new-found heir of the Bellingham estate.

With all his astuteness he could not penetrate the beautiful mask of her face and look down into the soul beneath to see the strange scheme she was nursing there—a scheme so incredible that only a woman, and such a woman as Zelia Bellingham, could have conceived it.

Despite the peril in which he stood, Roy experienced a feeling of annoyance that she should be there to plead for him, for he felt assured that her pleading would be in vain, and he disliked to see her tears and hear her supplications in his behalf.

And tears were in Zelia's dark-blue orbs as she clung to his breast and looked up piteously in his face.

The passing years had given Roy his father's stature, and he towered a head and shoulders above her, and looked so like his murdered sire that she had felt a shivering sensation through every limb when her strong love urged her to caress him.

"Why should I?" she cried, with tender reproach. "Oh! Roy, do you think I could see you die—you who are so dear to me? Can I lose all that I have in the world to love?"

Roy was surprised by these words.

"You forget Mary Frank," he said; "and there is Alverton, your son."

"Neither are as dear to me as you are."

"Not your own son?"

"No, no, Roy, no! Though my own son, he has never treated me with the respect and consideration you have. He is weak and vacillating, as his father was before him. You shall not die! I will save you at any price!" she added, with great fervency.

Romano Falcon overheard these words, and his dark eyes glittered, and a strange smile came over his swarthy face.

"That's the talk, madam!" cried Toss Meade, encouragingly, "and while you are about it just save me, too. Make the best bargain you can for us."

"Remember, if you do succeed in making terms with this miscreant for our ransom, I will repay you. You know I have the means," said Roy.

"There is only one way in which you can pay me; we'll settle that hereafter," murmured Zelia.

She blushed prettily, and turned toward Falcon.

"Will you accept a ransom?" she asked.

"Yes, from you," he answered, smilingly.

"Hooray!" exclaimed Toss. "There's nothing like a woman to help a fellow when he's in a scrape."

CHAPTER V.

THE RANSOM.

ZELIA'S eyes glistened joyfully. "Name it, then," she cried. "I have letters of credit on the banker, Gonzales Mongiote, in the city of Mexico. Name the amount you expect, and you shall have it."

The bandit smiled.

"The ransom I require is easily paid, if you are willing," he replied, somewhat ambiguously. "But we will not discuss it here. Will you favor me with a visit to my private apartment?"

"Certainly," she responded at once.

"Though I have made this old farm-house my headquarters, I have not occupied it sufficiently long to have it in a condition to receive so charming and distinguished a lady—and a friend, too, of that true patriot and holy man, the Padre Jaruata."

She waved her hand deprecatingly.

"Make no excuses," she rejoined. "I am content to take things as I find them. I do not purpose remaining here long, as I shall place myself under the escort of those two young soldiers, to be conducted to the American camp."

He smiled darkly, and in a manner that perplexed her.

"I can promise you a better escort," he answered. "However, that will be an after-consideration, when we have settled the matter of the ransom."

"I think that can be settled speedily."

"Perhaps," returned the bandit, and he smiled again.

Then turning to his men, he directed all but the two subalterns to quit the room.

"Tomaso and Edgardo," he said to them, "to your charge I confide these rangers; keep a sharp watch over them until I return. This way, madam."

He led the way from the room, and Zelia followed him unhesitatingly.

"She'll get us out of this, see it she don't!" cried Toss, confidently, when he and Roy were left with Tomaso and Edgardo.

Roy shook his head doubtfully.

"I'm not so sure of that. I'm afraid this Romano Falcon is tricky. He'll take the money she offers, and keep us all the same, perhaps."

Toss's countenance grew blank at this.

"Oh! do you think he would play such a trick on us as that?" he questioned.

"The Mexicans have proved treacherous in all their dealings with the Texans."

"But we are not Texans."

"It's all the same—we came here as Texan volunteers, and with Captain Walker, an officer who served with General Austin, Houston, and the other brave leaders who won freedom for the State. Make up your mind for the worst treatment, and then you will not be disappointed."

"Oh! you are a regular Job's comforter. I haven't made up my mind to peg out yet, and I don't mean to."

The grizzle bearded Tomaso approached Toss and gave him a resounding slap between the shoulders that made that youthful soldier catch his breath gaspingly.

"Good on your head!" cried Tomaso, whose voice was deep and cavernous, and not unlike the growling of a bear. "There's stuff in you!"

"Begorra there is—and in this long-haired, black-eyed chap, too!" added Edgardo, laying his hand on Roy's shoulder.

The rangers were very much astonished at being thus addressed in their own language.

"Phew!" gasped Toss, in an effort to get his breath back. "If there is stuff in me, you needn't knock all the stuffing out. I thought you were Mexicans, and you talk like a Yankee, and this fiery-faced individual is an Irishman."

"Bad cess to the tongue of ye, what makes you think I am an Irishman?" inquired Edgardo.

"Your brogue—it's thick enough," replied Toss, undauntedly.

"I am a free-born American, from County Kerry!"

"Well, isn't that in Ireland?"

"Yes; but I was brought over when I was a sucking babe, and weaned on an American bottle."

"Whisky?"

"Begorra! you hit it that time, my gay young volunteer."

And having said this, Edgardo chuckled pleasantly, displaying a set of strong white teeth, in a mouth of ample proportions.

"You are both Americans—North Americans," said Roy. "How is it that you are in league, or under the command of this Mexican miscreant?"

"Fortune of war, my boy," responded Tomaso, coolly. "We're a bad lot, we two; we've been going from bad to worse for many years, and I'm thinking this last shift of ours will fetch us up with a round turn."

"You're croaking again, Tom!" admonished his comrade, and then he turned to the young rangers and added, apologetically, "He's always at it—it's a way he's got."

"It's the sight of his face that makes me croak," said Tomaso, moodily. "It brings to my mind that cursed job—a job I've repented ever since. Of all my bad deeds—and Old Satan knows there's been enough of them—that sticks to me the worst. I would give this right hand to undo that night's work."

"Pooh! what's the use of talking that way? You can't undo what's done! You can't turn a cake back into dough when it is once baked, can you? Besides, how do you know that this is the boy? How could he have escaped from the burning mill?"

"He'll soon settle that," responded Tom Hartnett, who now answered to the Spanish appellation of Tomaso. "Hark ye, my lad, what's your name?"

The question was addressed to Roy.

"Leroy Bellingham," was the answer.

The two bandits exchanged glances, and Tomaso ejaculated:

"Ha!" in a manner that was equivalent to saying, "You see!"

Then he continued his interrogations.

"Your father's name was the same?"

"It was."

"And you had an uncle, or half-uncle, rather, named Onslow?"

Roy glanced surprisedly at his questioner.

"It appears to me that you are well acquainted with my history!" he cried.

Tom Hartnett smiled grimly.

"Well, it does look something that way, don't it? I should be more surprised if I could tell you some things that you don't know about yourself, and that would slightly astonish you."

Roy regarded the burly, grizzly ruffian attentively, but he could not recognize any familiar features in the bearded, seamed and bronzed face.

"Did I ever see you before?" he inquired.

"Mayhap you have and mayhap you haven't. You were where you might have seen me years ago, but you were too young then, I reckon, to pay much attention to what was going on around you."

Roy grew thoughtful.

"I have many strange memories of the past—misty remembrances that bewilder my brain—and I cannot account for them. I think there are people living who could explain these memories, separate the false from the real, and make them clear to my mind," he said. "Perhaps you are one of them?"

"Perhaps I am," responded Tomaso, vaguely.

"What is your name?"

"Thomas Hartnett, commonly called Tom, for short."

"My name is Thomas, too," interposed Toss Meade; "but I was always shortened into 'Toss.'"

"Well, that's queer!" commented Hartnett.

Roy turned this name over on his tongue, repeating it, as if appealing to his memory.

"Did you ever hear it before?" inquired Hartnett.

Roy shook his head doubtfully.

"I don't think I ever did," he answered; "at all events, I don't remember it."

"I don't think you ever heard it—leastways, your Uncle Onslow wouldn't be likely to mention it to you."

"Did you know my uncle?" cried Roy, curiously.

This strange man interested him greatly. It was so singular that he should meet with a person so familiar with his history and family in that foreign land and under such peculiar circumstances.

"Well, yes, my lad, I had some acquaintance with him years ago, and I helped him to a good thing, me and my chum here," said Hartnett, nodding his head toward Ned Graghty, who had been Mexicanized into Edgardo. "But I don't think he would like to have me claim acquaintance with him now; eh, Ned?"

"Begorra, he would not!" replied Edgardo, forcibly, "considerin' the youngster's at the fore."

He pointed significantly at Roy.

"My head is dazed," said Roy.

And that strange death-scene in the snowy woods rose vividly before his eyes.

"Dead!" ejaculated Hartnett, surprisedly. "When did he die?"

"It is now over five years ago."

"Were you with him when he died?"

"I was," answered Roy, briefly.

He did not deem it advisable to explain the manner and place of Onslow Bellingham's death.

"And did he know who you were?"

"Certainly," replied Roy; for his subsequent acknowledgment as Leroy Bellingham's son had made Onslow's dying words clear to him, and he was satisfied that Onslow had known who he was from their first meeting.

It was evident that Tom Hartnett was bewildered by this circumstance.

"But how did you get out of the mill?" he exclaimed, in a puzzled manner. "And was he friendly with you afterward?"

These questions threw Roy into a state of bewilderment equal to his own.

"What mill?" he cried. "He was not friendly with me—never acknowledged me."

"But his wife did—the woman that's with the captain now? She must be friendly to you, or why should she wish to ransom you?"

"Oh, yes, she is friendly—almost too friendly; but it was not known positively that I was Leroy Bellingham's son until after Onslow's death."

"It wasn't?"

"No."

"How was that?"

"I cannot tell you; there are many circumstances connected with my history which have never been explained to me, nor could I ever get Mrs. Bellingham or my guardian, Richard Eaton, to explain them to me. I cannot understand why they should so persistently decline to speak of the past. It has never been made clear to me how I am Leroy Bellingham's son, when I nearly reached the age of fifteen bearing the name of Roy Wilder, and supposed myself to be the son of Belcher Wilder and his wife Eunice. I was taught to call them father and mother, and I always regarded and loved them as such."

"And so you were called Wilder?" questioned Hartnett, musingly. "I think I see into this matter a little now. This Belcher Wilder was a sporting character in Boston."

Roy could not restrain his surprise.

"I see that you do know much of my boyhood's history, and I am in hopes that you will clear up the misty points of my remembrance for me," he cried. "You are right, Belcher Wilder was what is called a 'sporting character,' but a braver, more wholesouled and good-hearted man never lived."

"I guess that was a pretty good sort of a man, as the world goes, but I only knew him by sight. Saw him two or three times when I was living around Boston, and doing a little in the burglary line."

Tom Hartnett spoke of his nefarious pursuits as coolly as if he had been engaged in some reputable business.

"Burglary!" ejaculated Roy.

"Why, you're a regular old fib!" cried Toss Meade.

Tom Hartnett smiled in his grim fashion.

"I just am, youngster," he rejoined; "and Old Time ain't worn my teeth down smooth yet. I thought I recognized the face of that fellow that gave us such a peppering that night in the mill. If his ammunition had lasted he'd have finished the lot us us."

"Begorra! he would," added Ned Graghty. "He put a bullet each into Tim Dwyer, Ben Crowther, and Jack Stepsohn, and neither one squeaked afterwards. And he put a mark on that half-uncle of yours that he never rubbed off, I'll be bound."

"Ha! the scar on Onslow's face?" cried Roy, with interest. "He said it was the result of a hunting accident."

"And so it was," replied Tom Hartnett; "we were on the biggest kind of a hunt that night. So Wilder got out of it? That's strange! I always thought that both you and he perished in the flames of the burning mill."

"What mill? I have no remembrance of a burning mill!"

"I suppose not; you were too young at that time to remember much about it. Didn't you ever hear how your father lost his life?"

Roy glanced surprisedly at his questioner.

"No; I was told that he lost his life by an accident, and that I was supposed to have perished with him, but I was never told the particulars. Perhaps you could tell me?" added Roy, eagerly.

"Mayhap I could."

"Don't be a fool, Tom!" cried Ned Graghty, sharply.

"Don't worry—I don't mean to, Ned," responded Hartnett, coolly. "I'll never blow the gaff on certain parties that we know of. If Onslow Bellingham is dead, and you are in possession of your father's property—are you?"

"I am; I was put in possession without opposition," answered Roy. "I was acknowledged by Mrs. Bellingham as soon as she became satisfied of my true birth."

"Mrs. Bellingham—that handsome lady that's talking now with our captain about your ransom?"

"Yes."

"She was your father's wife?"

"Yes; his second. She is not my mother. When I met her first she was the wife of Onslow Bellingham, my father's half-brother."

Tom Hartnett whistled gently to himself, and exchanged a meaning glance with Ned Graghty.

"She married him after your father's death?" continued Hartnett, with interest.

"Yes."

"How soon after?"

"I do not know—but it must have been soon, for she has a boy only three or four years younger than myself."

"Phew! that accounts for the milk in the cocoanut—eh, Ned?"

"Begorra, it just does. The woman's face is enough to turn any man's head; and the dainty gentleman that we hunted with that night did not appear to have a remarkably strong one."

Roy's brow clouded.

"Men, what is this dark mystery of the past to which you refer so vaguely?" he cried, impatiently. "What was there in my father's death that the manner of it should be kept from me? Tell me, if you know; I would avenge him."

"You cannot," replied Hartnett.

"Why not?" demanded Roy, fiercely.

"Because the man who contrived his death is dead."

"Ha! Onslow Bellingham?"

"You've hit it!"

Roy was silent for a few moments, pondering over this information.

"I have often wondered at what I considered my strange dislike toward that man," he murmured, half aloud—" and his repellent manner toward myself. It is easily accounted for now. He was my father's enemy—that's plain. But she—Zelia! Tell me," he continued, earnestly, addressing himself to Hartnett and Graghty, "do you think she conspired with my uncle against my father?"

He looked significantly at the door through which Zelia had followed Romano Falcon.

"Did what?" inquired Hartnett, scarcely comprehending the question.

"Did she have any hand in my father's death?" Hartnett looked surprised.

"If she did, I did not know it," he answered; "I scarcely think so; do you, Ned?"

"Begorra! I'll go bail she didn't!" exclaimed Graghty, emphatically. "She's too much of an angel to have been mixed up in any such devil's work."

Roy experienced a feeling of relief.

"I am glad to hear you say so," he replied. "I would not cherish an ill-feeling against her for the world. She has always treated me with the greatest kindness. Indeed, so she herself told me but now, her affection for me is stronger than that she bears for her own son. See how urgently she pleaded with your robber chief for my release; and if, as is natural, he should be fond of gold, I have little doubt that she will succeed with him."

Hartnett approached close to Roy and whispered these words to him:

"Make your mind easy on one point, my lad; you won't die this time. Never mind what the captain determines on, there's more white men than yellaribellies in this crowd, and if Ned and I say the word they'll stand by us, and we won't permit him to murder you and your friend."

Roy gazed upon this strange man in grateful surprise.

"Why do you take such interest in my fate?" he asked.

"Because I was instrumental in doing you an ill-turn once, and I would make some amends for it now."

"Why not reveal to me the mystery of my father's fate, then?"

Hartnett shook his head.

"Let by-gones be by-gones," he replied; "there's no use in raking up the past, after all these years."

"But tell me, was my father's death really contrived by Onslow Bellingham?" insisted Roy.

"Didn't the man that raised you, Wilder, ever tell you?" returned Hartnett, evasively.

"No; he died without knowing that I would gain my true father's name."

"Died—is he dead?"

"Yes."

"How long has he been dead?"

"Five years."

"So long! What killed him?"

"He was killed by an accident on the mill-dam in Boston while sleigh-riding."

"That's odd. And he never told you who you was?"

"He did not. I was indebted to certain papers that I discovered in the garret of a farm-house, whilst visiting with an old playmate there."

"Ah! the papers that Onslow Bellingham thought was burnt in the mill; but how did they get into the garret of the farm-house. There was only Ned and I, and——" He hesitated a little here, checked by a warning cough from Graghty. "Our employer," he continued, "and I'll swear neither of us handled those papers that night."

"Begorra, I'll go bail he didn't," added Graghty; and he added, in an undertone, to his comrade, "Whist, Tom; drive on easy!"

Hartnett shrugged his shoulders, as much as to say:

"Let me alone, I know what I'm about;" and then he asked Roy:

"How did the papers get into the garret?"

"They were found the morning after the burning of the old mill by a country boy named Micajah Fry, in a coat which was hidden in a stone fence on the other side of the road opposite the mill. He took them home and concealed them in the garret, thinking if he professed them he would have to restore the coat, which he wished to keep; and there the papers rested until I found them. It almost appears as if the Hand of Heaven directed me to them."

"I don't know much about the Hand of Heaven," rejoined Hartnett; "but I can guess pretty well what hand put that coat in the stone wall."

"Crowther!" ejaculated Graghty.

"I reckon; and I know why he never went back to get it."

"Begorra! so do I."

Both the ruffians indulged in a hoarse laugh here, to the great surprise of Roy and Toss; but their mirth was cut short by the return of Romano Falcon and Zelia Bellingham to the room.

[To be continued.]

"Roy the Ranger" was commenced in No. 661.

WILD ROSE AND VIOLET;

Or,

Fun at Mrs. Hawk's.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

[Continued from page 142.]

"WHAT is that droning sound?" asked the principal, who had no ear for melody. "Is it a moth in the room?"

"No, mamma," replied her daughters; "it sounds like it."—they listened for a moment, and then added —"music of some sort."

"Who can it be playing music of any sort at this hour?" demanded Mrs. Hawk, sternly.

"I think it must be a band in the road," suggested Miss Prudence.

"No, dear," interposed Priscilla, who delighted in contradicting her sister; "it is evidently not in the road."

At this juncture the tum-tum, tink-tink seemed to grow louder.

"I believe it is one of those horrid organs," said Mrs. Hawk.

"Oh, no, mamma dear!" exclaimed her first-born; "it is not an organ, it is too harp like."

She inclined her ear as she spoke in a listening attitude.

Tum-tum, tink-tink, the musical instrument seemed to reply gratefully from without.

"I really think it comes from the garden!" she ejaculated, after a moment.

"I believe it is one of those horrid organs," said Mrs. Hawk.

"Oh, no, mamma dear!" exclaimed her first-born; "it is not an organ, it is too harp like."

She inclined her ear as she spoke in a listening attitude.

Tum-tum, tink-tink, the musical instrument seemed to reply gratefully from without.

"I really think it comes from the garden!" she ejaculated, after a moment.

"I think so, too," asserted Prudence; "and it sounds like a guitar."

"A guitar!" echoed the principal, indignantly. "Impossible! Who could be playing a guitar in my garden at this time of night?"

This was more than either of her daughters could inform her, but the sounds evidently excited their curiosity.

Nor was this in any way diminished when the harmony, which had hitherto been simple accompaniment, now received the addition of a rich and melodious voice, which sang:

"Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night is flown;
Come into the garden, Maud,
I'm here at the gate alone;
I'm here at the gate alone."

Priscilla stole to the window and peeped cautiously out.

"Oh, mamma!" she exclaimed, "there are two of them."

"Two what?" demanded her mother, gruffly.

"Two—a—a gentlemen, I think."

"Yes, mamma, they are gentlemen!" exclaimed Prudence. "In cloaks and masks!"

This was sufficient at once to excite the indignation of Mrs. Hawk.

"Two gentlemen in cloaks and masks!" she muttered: "impossible!"

"Look, then, mamma, and judge for yourself," requested her younger daughter.

The stern matron stalked across the room, glanced down and became at once conscious of the fact that, there actually were two disguised intruders standing beneath the window.

Her indignant thoughts at once reverted to the past, and she muttered to herself, wrathfully:

"It is those prowling wolves again, come doubtless out of malicious spite to disturb my repose with their hideous howling."

"And the planet of love is on high
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves,
On a bed of daffodil sky,"

warbled Harry Targent, mellifluously, without.

"Ridiculous nonsense!" growled the incensed principal.

"The words are Tennyson's, ma, dear," lisped Priscilla, who seemed rather to like the singing.

"I don't care whose they are!" snapped her irate mamma: "they're a nuisance at this hour of the night; and the whole proceeding is an unwarrantable intrusion."

But the musicians, ignorant of the effect they were producing, continued with increasing spirit; and the tum-tum, tink-tink, and the song went on in as lively a manner as ever.

"This is too much. Priscilla, bring me the water-jug!" sternly commanded the furious preceptress.

"Oh, ma!" pleaded her daughters in dismay and some sympathy for the two gentlemen.

"The water-jug, I say!" repeated Mrs. Hawk, in an adamantine tone.

It was brought to her by Prudence, though not very willingly; and the song continued:

"To faint in the light of the sun she loves
To faint in his light and to die."

"Open the window, Priscilla—very gently," was the next injunction.

The injunction was obeyed, and the harmony burst into the room in a full flood, and the concluding words were now distinctly audible:

"'Maud, Maud, come!
I'm here at the ga-a-a-ate, a——"

At this moment the arm of the outraged preceptress, with the water jug at the end of it, was rapidly protruded from the open window.

The song suddenly ceased and a loud and startled exclamation arose, as the contents of the jug were discharged on their heads.

Nor was this all, for the dispenser of the shower-bath, in her anxiety that it should proceed effectually, involuntarily relaxed her grasp from the handle of the jug, which immediately followed and fell with a crash on a vital part of the guitar, effectually stopping its harmless tum-tum, tink-tink, from that moment.

"Oh, hang it! confound it!" ejaculated Harry and Theodore, simultaneously, gasping as the cold stream trickled down their back, "who is it? what is it?"

An angry face of sternly Roman contour, brought into bold relief by the voluminous drapery of an antique nightcap, looked out upon them in an awfully explanatory manner,

"Let that be a warning to you, you audacious, impertinent interlopers!" exclaimed a ferocious voice, that proceeded from the mouth of the face, after which both head and nightcap were withdrawn, and the window was sharply slammed down.

"Here's a pretty mistake!" cried Harry Targent, after a moment; "instead of the young ladies, we've been serenading their grandmother."

"She evidently despises music," added Theodore, holding up the fractured guitar; "here's a wreck! What will Milly say?"

"That we're a couple of fools for our pains," returned Harry, as he shook the drops from his hair: "I vote we decamp, or perhaps the worthy old lady overhead may feel inclined to supplement the water-jug with the washband-basin, or the soap-dish."

"I'm quite ready," said Theodore, and with a parting glance up at the window the young gentlemen took their departure.

When at the expiration of a short time the principal looked out again she had the satisfaction of discovering that the coast was clear.

* * * * * * *

Milly Westlake was of course anxious to know the result of the "serenading" expedition, and the next morning as soon as breakfast was over she applied to her brother for a full and detailed account.

She had previously noticed a peculiarly crest-fallen and dejected expression in the faces both of him and his friend, Mr. Tadpole, and she augured, therefore, unfavorably of their adventure.

"Now, then, I want you to tell me everything that happened last night," she said to Theodore, in a confidential, coaxing tone. "How did you get on—did you make a great sensation?"

"I don't know what we made," returned Theodore, in a discomfited manner, "but I'm sure we received one."

"Oh, do let me hear!" urged his sister; "you played and Mr. Tadpole sang something, I suppose. What key did you sing in, Mr. Tadpole?" she asked, mischievously, of Harry Targent.

"Two flats, I rather think," he responded, moodily.

"And what did you sing?" continued the inquisitive Milly.

"I sang 'Come into the Garden, Maud!'" replied Harry.

"Ah, that was very pretty and appropriate," laughed Milly, "especially if the window was high. But I suppose you had a ladder to enable the dear one to descend to her adorer? Well, and did she come?"

"No," returned Theodore, bluntly; "she didn't; but a shower of water did, that washed all the romance out of our heads in a moment."

Milly laughed outright as she exclaimed:

"What ungrateful creatures to give their gallant cavaliers such a chilly reception."

"You surely don't suppose it was the young ladies that assailed us in this way?" cried Theodore, indignantly.

"Oh!" returned Milly, with affected surprise; "who was it, then?"

"Some awful old woman in a nightcap, I suppose enough to frighten a fellow out of his wits," replied her brother, irritably; "the young ladies' grandmother, I imagine."

"Why, she surely didn't vent her spite upon the guitar?" said Milly.

"Didn't she, though! It seems to me that she did, for not content with emptying the jug over our heads, the unappreciative old woman threw the jug as well."

"What, at your heads?"

"Such might might have been her intention, but fortunately for us the jug fell upon the guitar, which it smashed completely."

"Oh, my poor guitar!" exclaimed Milly; "what a shame!"

"Never mind, old woman," said Theodore, consolingly; "I'll have it repaired, and if that can't be done I'll buy you a new one."

"Oh, never mind the guitar!" laughed Milly; "it was only my fun. Then you never saw the girls at all?"

"Not a glimpse of them," replied Harry, joining in the conversation; "but we probably went to the wrong window."

"I'm inclined to think so," assented Milly.

"Never mind," exclaimed Theodore. "we'll contrive to see them again, in spite of all grandmothers."

"I admire your declaration," said Milly; "but I say," beckoning to her brother to approach, "what business has an engaged young gentleman to be running after other young ladies, eh?"

"Oh, that—I mean this—is nothing—only a little—a—freak—you know—and—a—of course—I—a——"

Theodore Westlake stammered over this attempt at explanation, and, beckoning to Harry, made a hasty exit from the garden.

"Oh, you men, you men!" exclaimed Milly, after he was gone. "And this is the way you play with the hearts of us poor confiding girls. Engaged to one and flirting all the time with—I've never seen Miss Blizzard's address," she said, to herself; "but it strikes me Theodore's much more smitten with our Violet than he is with her. We shall see."

She determined at once to pay Constance a visit, where she also expected to meet Rose Royston and Violet Leigh.

This idea had scarcely crossed her mind when the carriage containing her friend stopped at the gates of Rose Lodge.

Milly flew out and received Constance almost before her feet touched the gravel path.

"Oh, what do you think, Mil?" exclaimed the latter, after the first hurried salutations.

"What, dear?"

"Mrs. Hawk refuses to allow Rose and Violet to accept my invitation."

"Monstrous! You're not going to stand it, are you?"

Milly started up from her seat involuntarily, as though she would have rushed off there and then to resent the insult.

"I appealed to Mrs. Hawk for nearly an hour yesterday, and all to no purpose, and I'm sure I don't know what's to be done now," Constance replied; "and what do you suppose is the cause of all this?" she added, impatiently.

"I know what," Milly answered at once. "Two young gentlemen."

"Why, how were you informed?" asked Constance, in much astonishment.

"Oh, the information of the young gentlemen in question happen to be my brother Theodore and his friend Humphrey Tadpole," explained Milly.

"Is it possible? How very singular!"

"Quite a coincidence, is it not?"

"Quite a coincidence, you know whether Rose and Violet are aware of the relationship?" asked Constance.

"I'm sure they are not," answered Milly. "They none of them know even each other's names.

"Then you didn't enlighten your brother upon this point?"

"No, darling," returned Milly, with a mischievous smile in her hazel eyes. "I kept my own counsel, because if our friends should eventually get out, as I fancy they will, what a jolly bit of fun it will be to notice their various expressions when I introduce them, so seriously as a judge, to one another. Oh, I wouldn't lose that sight for the world."

"It would be glorious, wouldn't it?" warmly assented Constance; "but do you know Rose and Violet all but escaped from their prison?"

"No; I heard nothing of that."

"Oh, yes, they had surmounted the wall—trunks and all."

"Well, but surely they couldn't lift their trunks over themselves?" exclaimed Milly, incredulously; "and poor little pet, brick as he is, couldn't——"

"Oh, don't call him a brick!" interrupted Constance, indignantly; "he's a treacherous little monster. It was he who frustrated the whole plan."

"Oh, the little wretch!"

"You've heard Rose Royston speak of Kit Crump, haven't you?" continued Constance.

"Oh, yes, often, often."

"Well, he had come from the country and got the boxes over the wall. It was he who called a cab, and our friends would have got clear off if that little pygmy traitor hadn't brought 'The Hawks' down upon them. Of course that put a stop to everything."

"Oh, how cruel!" cried Milly, with deep sympathy. "And what is to be done now?" she asked.

"Well, there's one thing," said Constance. "Kit knows where the ladies prisoners are, and as it seems to me he's a host in himself, we'd better wait a day or two and see what happens. On one point, however, I'm sure we are both determined, and that is, never to rest till we have set our friends at liberty."

"Never!" exclaimed Milly, grasping her schoolfellow's hand dramatically; "the vow is registered!"

And with this heroic resolve the two "Jolly Girls" separated for the present.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A CRITICAL POSITION.

PET'S repentance was sincere, and he was anxious to make all the reparation in his power.

Kit still remained concealed in the page's "privit apartment" over the boot-house.

Between Pet and the rustic there had sprung up a friendship, and both were now unanimous in their desire to set Rose and Violet at liberty.

Pet felt that he should never know what peace meant until he had gone down on his knees and implored Violet's pardon.

On the evening succeeding that on which Theodore Westlake and Harry Targent had made such a decided failure of the serenade, our young heroines sat wondering whether any kind of propitious star would shine upon them and point the road to liberty. As they thus meditated they were aroused by a slight tapping at the window.

They could scarcely believe their own eyes as they recognized the page.

"Open the winder, quick!" he called.

Rose started up with flashing eyes.

"The little traitor!" she exclaimed; "what does he want here? I feel inclined to knock him off the ladder."

"Don't do that, dear," interposed Violet. "Perhaps he is sorry for what he has done."

"So he ought to be," returned Rose, as she opened the window and sternly confronted the youth with the buttons.

The latter at once took advantage of the means of ingress, and plunged headforemost from the window-ledge into the room.

Having done this, he hurried to Violet, and fell on his knees before her.

"Forgive me," he cried; "do forgive me, or I shall do something desp'rate—I'm sure I shall."

"Forgive you, indeed!" exclaimed Rose, indignantly. "We owe it entirely to you that we are shut up here, you little sneak!"

"Oh, don't call me a sneak!—please don't!" moaned Peter; "I can't bear it."

"What induced you to betray us so treacherously?" asked Violet; "you, whom we trusted so entirely. What could have possessed you?"

"It was an evil spirit, miss, as took possession of me!" exclaimed the small youth, remorsefully, as he smote his left row of buttons with his hand. "When I see you a-talkin' to that swell wi' th' light 'air an' whiskers, an' when I see 'im a-kissin' 'is hand to yer over the pallis's, I felt as though I'd swallered pis'n, an' I didn't know what I was doin'."

"I suppose you have at liberty to speak to whom I please, you silly boy?"

"Oh, yes, yes! o' course you are, Miss Violet," assented the page; "an' it's like my impudence to say anything about it."

"Well, then," said Rose, bluntly, "get up from off your knees, and behave yourself like a sensible boy, and not like a little idiot, and tell us what brings you here?"

Peter Pippins did as he was desired, and then replied:

"I've come to bring you some good news."

"What news?" eagerly asked the young girls.

"Why, in th' first place, the old un and the two Miss 'Awks is a-goin' to Brighton to-morrer; next, th' painters is come, an' they've brought a ladder long enough to reach your winder. An', last, Kit Crump's 'ere, an' we've made a vow not to rest till we've got yer both safe out o' pris'n."

The delightful intelligence, brought to the captives at a moment when their prospects seemed particularly hopeless, went far toward restoring the bearer of the information to his former place in their estimation.

"Are you really in earnest now, Pet?" asked Rose.

I am, indeed, miss," Pet protested; "never was more earnester in my life."

"Then we forgive you," said Violet; "and we will think just as highly of you as ever we did."

"Will yer, though—will yer, really?" exclaimed the page.

"Yes, we will really," was the reply.

"Then I feels myself again. But I think we'd better not attempt anything till th' 'Awks 'ave took their flight. After that we can commence op'rations."

"They start to-morrow?" asked Rose.

"Yes, miss; to-morrer, early."

"Very well, then; as soon as possible after their departure we shall be ready to make another attempt."

"All right, miss; an' this time there sha'n't be no failure. I sar it, an' I mean it."

"But our boxes?" suddenly bethought Rose Royston.

"Ah, th' boxes!" echoed the youth, reflecting; "you'll want them pertickler, won't you?"

"Rather," ejaculated Rose; "all our things are in them."

"Well, I'll find where they are, an' I'll manage to get 'em out for yer some 'ow."

"That's a good fellow!" exclaimed the girls, gratefully. "If you only do this we shall consider you have quite redeemed your character, and we shall call you as we used to do—a little brick!"

"That's enough!" cried the delighted Pet; "consider yer've got yer boxes."

At this moment footsteps were heard on the stairs.

The trio had forgotten the old legend which declares that walls have ears.

A panic seized them as Pet ejaculated, in a hasty whisper:

"Sh! there's some un comin'!"

He darted to the window.

"Shut it quiet arter me," he said, as he sprang on to the window-ledge.

Horror! Escape that way was impossible!

The ladder was gone!

Pet ran his eye round the room rapidly, and then, without a word, made a rush to the fireplace.

"It's for 'er sake," he murmured to himself, "an' if I'm suffocated she'll know why;" and then he climbed up the chimney.

When the door opened and disclosed the portly form of Mrs. Hawk, with Janet Sly at her heels, Rose and Violet were sitting in attitudes of silent resignation opposite each other.

"You have doubtless, at the same time, young ladies, a sense of your misconduct?" said Mrs. Hawk.

"I feel very tired of being shut up in this solitary room, ma'am," returned Rose.

"So do I," said Violet.

"I have no doubt you do," remarked the principal, in a tone of much satisfaction.

"Can you give us any idea, ma'am, how long we are to be locked up here?" asked Rose Royston, with admirable simplicity.

"That entirely depends upon yourselves," replied Mrs. Penelope; "I have paid you this visit to inform you that to-morrow I start, with my daughters for our usual recreative trip. During my absence I leave you to the care of my faithful servant, Janet Sly. When it becomes apparent that you are thoroughly brought to a sense of your faults—but not till then—you may expect forgiveness. On the receipt of a letter expressive of such a state of mind I shall write in reply, authorizing you to take recreation twice a day for an hour in the playground, but on no account to venture beyond its limits. And now I bid you farewell, trusting that when we meet again your moral perceptions will have become greatly elevated and enlarged. Good-night, young ladies."

Mrs. Hawk was about to make her exit in a very grand and imposing manner, when Pet was obliged to give way to three violent, though suppressed sneezes.

"A-tch!—a-tch!—a-a-tch!"

The principal paused and looked at Janet Sly. Janet Sly looked in her turn at her mistress.

"What in the world's that?" exclaimed Mrs. Hawk.

"Seems like some one sneezing, mum," returned Janet, promptly.

"So I thought," assented the preceptress. "Who is there here that could have sneezed?"

She fixed her eyes upon the prisoners.

"Have you any idea?" she asked.

"Not in the least, ma'am."

"It's very strange, is it not, Janet?"

"Very, ma'am," replied the parasite.

"Wherever there is a sneeze," the principal continued, "it follows, as a matter of course, there must be a sneezer."

"Certainly, ma'am," Janet replied.

Mrs. Hawk turned to the housemaid and said:

"I shall feel more satisfied if you search the room in my presence."

The obedient Janet cheerfully proceeded to do as she was ordered.

She looked in all the cupboards and under the bed, but not a vestige of anything capable of a sneeze was discovered.

Both mistress and maid were puzzled.

Suddenly another solitary and more remote sneeze was heard, and this gave the lady a clue.

"Janet," she said, "it seems to me that that sneeze came from the chimney."

"Oh, mum!" ejaculated the housemaid, "do you really think so, mum?"

"I do, Janet," was the brief reply. "Look if there is any one there."

The housemaid approached the fireplace, to the utter dismay of our heroines.

Janet cautiously proceeded to look up the chimney.

"Do you see anything?" asked the mistress.

"Nothing, mum," she replied, still peering upward; "but I fancy I can see—oh, ah, 'oo!" she shrieked, suddenly, as a mass of soot completely smothered her.

Janet hastily withdrew her head, and howled piteously.

Rose Royston, with a hope of averting suspicion, said:

"I have known birds build their nests in chimneys, ma'am; and when they do the twittering of the young ones causes a strange sound."

There was some reason in this, as Mrs. Hawk had herself heard of such a circumstance; but she thought birds, as a rule, did not sneeze. In order to make quite sure she suddenly hit upon an expedient.

"Janet," she said, "light a fire in that grate directly."

The housemaid, looking like a human crow, groped her way to the door, and made hasty preparations to execute the command.

"Oh, poor Pet!" murmured Violet, in a distressed whisper. "Whatever will become of him? He'll be burnt to death."

"Not he; he's not so silly," returned Rose. "Keep quiet."

But hadn't we better confess that he's there?"

"No, no! Be still!" urged Rose.

The matron Hawk had advanced to the fireplace, where she stood listening intently.

In a short time Janet returned with the requisites for making a fire, and presently the loud crackling of wood and the roaring of the flames in the chimney announced that the fire was alight.

But still nothing unusual occurred. No nest of young birds came fluttering down. No ghastly object in the shape of a half-roasted youth in a page's livery made its appearance on to the carpet.

There was evidently nothing there.

Mrs. Hawk's suspicions having been lulled, and the fire burnt itself out, she said:

"I think, after all, it must have been fancy. But you will keep your eyes open, Janet; we cannot be too cautious. Once more, young ladies, good-night."

The principal swept from the room and Janet Sly followed.

As soon as Rose and Violet were alone they rushed excitedly to the fireplace, and Rose, stooping her head, looked up the chimney.

She could see distinctly the clear blue sky through the opening above, but no signs of the page. She called softly:

"Pet, Pet! are you there?"

Almost immediately in response a small face appeared looking down upon her through the chimney-pot, and the familiar voice of Pet was heard:

"All right, miss!" he cried, assuredly; "I'm a-comin' down."

True to his word, in another moment he came scrambling, sliding, and slipping, until he stood safe and sound, and as black as a lump of coal before them.

"Oh Pet! how glad I am you're not burnt or smothered!" exclaimed Violet, in a tone of intense relief.

"Oh, no, miss, I'm all right enough," cried the page; "directly I 'eard the old un give orders for t' fire to be lighted, I wriggles myself up th' chimney an' gets out at th' top. You see," he added, "there's a advantage in bein' little sometimes."

Rose and Violet regarded Pet with profound admiration.

"I wonder 'oo took me ladder away?" he soliloquized to himself, as he opened the window.

To his astonishment, he found himself face to face with Kit.

"I was obliged to take away the ladder for a bit, 'cos I 'eared some one comin'," Kit exclaimed; "but 'ee can come down now. The coast is quite clear."

Rose and Violet, hearing Kit's voice, hastened to the window.

"Ah, Kit, dear old fellow!" cried the former, offering him her hand, which he grasped warmly; "I believe now we shall soon be out of this miserable place."

"That 'ee shall, Miss Rose!" he exclaimed, confidently; "please th' pigs, you shall be out to-morrer."

Further delay being dangerous, Kit and the page descended, and the ladder was removed.

CHAPTER XXX.

ESCAPED AT LAST.

"I TELL you what, 'Dore," said Harry Targent, as, after waiting an hour at the lake the next morning, they approached the palings and peered over, "it has just struck me this is a school, and that the young ladies we are looking after are two of the pupils who have gone home for the holidays."

"Why, of course; it must be," returned Theodore, "or we should most assuredly have seen something of them before this; and while we're wasting our time on this unsatisfactory wild goose chase the pretty creatures may be miles and miles away, immersed in the full tide of holiday pleasure, without ever bestowing a thought upon us except, perhaps, to laugh at us as a pair of infatuated donkeys."

"Well," remarked Harry, moodily, "ours seems to be disappointment, and so I move that we give up the pursuit and say farewell for ever to those, who seem to have said farewell to us."

"I second the motion," said Theodore, in a similarly gloomy tone. "'Fare ye well, and if for ever, still for ever fare ye well.'"

* * * * * *

Milly Westlake having waited two days, and hearing nothing either from her imprisoned friends or Constance Grey, began to feel anxious. So she resolved to start off and pay her friend Con a visit at Richmond.

She felt that between them they would be able to hit upon some plan for their deliverance.

After lunch the brougham was ordered, and away she went.

* * * * * *

It was a close, sultry afternoon, and the painters went about their work sluggishly, and moved their brushes in a dreary manner over the dusty face of Meditation Hall.

Janet Sly had finished her midday meal, and dozed placidly in her chair in the kitchen.

Martha, the cook, slumbered soundly in another.

"They're safe now for a 'our, at least," Pet whispered to Kit.

The page had already found the trunks, still packed and corded.

It was the work of not more than a few moments to carry the boxes to the side-door.

This done, they hurried to place the ladder at the window, by means of which the prisoners were to reach the ground.

This also was soon accomplished, and Kit ascended and tapped at the pane.

Rose Royston opened the casement at once.

"Now, then," exclaimed Kit, "be ye ready?"

"Quite," Rose replied.

"Coom on, then. Cook an' t'other un be fast asleep i' th' kitchen an' the'll never 'ave a better chance."

But now came a difficulty.

The window was three stories high, and in spite of all her anxious desire for freedom, Violet dared not venture her foot upon the ladder.

Rose, daring and excited, would have risked anything.

But her companion was more timid, and her heart failed her.

It was in vain Rose tried to assure her there was no danger.

In vain Kit offered to carry her in his arms down the ladder.

She could not make up her mind to trust herself.

"Oh, dear, dear!" Rose exclaimed, in a fever of excitement; "whatever shall we do?"

"You go, darling, and leave me behind," urged Violet, who was greatly ashamed of the timidity she could not overcome.

"I'm sure I won't," returned Rose, almost indignantly; "you know that I promised that unless you went with me I would not go myself. But it is a pity, dear, you're so faint-hearted."

"Oh, yes, it is, it is!" cried Violet, in a tone of intense self-reproach. "I'm only a great baby, and not fit to be called a Jolly Girl at all. You shan't stop for me, dear. Do go."

"No, never," exclaimed Rose, resolutely.

Pet, wondering what caused the delay, came hurrying up.

"Ain't yer comin'?" he asked.

"Oh, yes; Rose is," Violet answered. "I daren't venture."

"Neither will I, then," added Rose, decidedly. "We're very—very much obliged to you both for your readiness to assist us, but if one remains a prisoner both must."

Kit looked much depressed.

Pet was almost beside himself.

"Yer shan't remain pris'ners. If I can 'elp it, blest if yer shall!" he exclaimed. "Wait a minnit."

Pet sprang out of the window with the agility of a monkey, and gliding down as though he was descending by a fire-escape, disappeared.

Having reached the ground he hurried to the kitchen, and looked in as before, cautiously. The cook and housemaid still slumbered. Noiselessly he approached Janet and lightly disentangled the skirt from its folds, until the entrance to her pocket was fully revealed.

Into this his cautious hand dived, and in an instant reappeared, grasping a bunch of keys.

With a flush of triumph on his face he hurried up the stairs.

He had not been gone three minutes, but to those who awaited his return they seemed twenty.

The door opened, and Pet appeared in a state of breathless excitement, from the haste with which he ascended.

"Oh!" cried the young girls, "you've got the key."

"I just 'ave," returned Pet; "an' now good luck to yer, get out while yer can—yer knows the way. Janet an' Martha's fast asleep in the kitchin. Go down as quiet as mice, an' make yer way to the side-door; the boxes is waitin' there all ready. Kit an' me'll go down by the ladder."

Without another word Rose and Violet hurried down the stairs and went out softly by the back-parlor window on to the lawn, then they hurried on till they came to the door in the wall, where they found their stanch confederates awaiting them.

"Bravo!" cried Rose Royston. "I think we are safe at last."

"I think yer be," said Pet. "Won't it be a pu'sier to Janet how yer got out?"

"She'll know, won't she, when she misses her keys?" remarked Violet.

"She won't miss 'em," returned the page; "that's the fun of the thing. I've put the keys back in her pocket, an'—he, he!—all the time she's snorin' away an' knows nothink about it."

This was such a delicious joke that they all laughed heartily.

"Well, you are a regular little brick!" exclaimed Rose, as she grasped the page's hand.

"That you are!" warmly assented Violet, following her companion's example. "We're so very much obliged to you, and so will all the Jolly Girls be when they hear what you've done."

"You're very welcome," returned the small youth, in a tone of sad resignation; "I hopes I've done my dooty. I ain't very big, but I think my heart's in the right place."

Kit then lifted the trunks into the lane, and the whole party proceeded to the end of the lane, which opened into the main road, and waited anxiously for a chance cab. Of course none came.

The fair fugitives began to grow nervously anxious.

"We ought to have engaged a conveyance beforehand," exclaimed Rose.

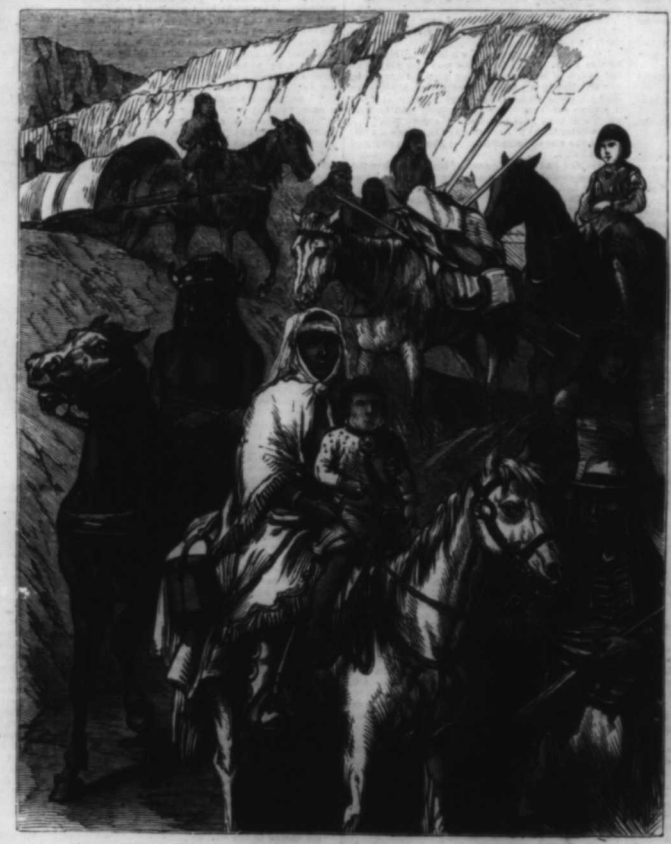
Just then a handsome barouche appeared in sight.

It slackened its pace as it drew near the school.

The proceeding struck them as somewhat remarkable, but presently a handsome girl looked from the carriage and directed her gaze toward the upper windows of the mansion she was approaching.

One glance was sufficient for Rose Royston to recognize her at once, and she cried out:

"It's Constance!"



A TALK ABOUT THE INDIANS OF THE PLAINS.—A PARTY OF INDIANS REMOVING FROM THEIR VILLAGE TO AVOID A THREATENED ATTACK.

The sound of her voice reached the occupant.

A joyous exclamation burst from her lips as she caught sight of her friends.

Calling to the coachman to stop, she opened the door, and springing down, hurried toward her schoolfellows.

The next moment they were eagerly embracing each other.

"Oh, this is capital!" cried Constance, as she listened to the brief account of their escape. "Now we can defy the old Cerberus."

The boxes were quickly brought forward and lifted into the vehicle, and the young ladies stepped in.

Kit took a seat behind with the footman.

The fugitives waved their hands gayly to Pet, and the carriage rolled away.

"Free, free!" cried Rose and Violet, with a burst of delight as the confines of the scholastic prison faded from view.

"I was going to pay Milly a visit," said Constance, "and as I've found you, there's no reason why we shouldn't make the call together. I'm sure she'll be delighted."

"And I'm sure we shall be delighted to see her," said Rose.

"Very well, then; for Ealing, ho! I hope we shall find her at home."

These words were scarcely uttered when a brougham, advancing in the opposite direction, came in sight, and as the carriages were passing each other, there was a mutual exclamation of joyful surprise from those inside them.

"Milly!"

"Constance!—Rose and Violet, too!—stop, stop!"

These last excited exclamations were to the coachmen, whose thumbs were well-nigh pulled off by the violent tuggings at their respective check-strings.

The vehicles having been drawn up close to each other, there was a general outpouring of mutual congratulations.

"Well," cried Milly, "this is very delightful indeed; just as I was beginning to fear you were both condemned to solitary confinement for the whole vacation, I find you free as the air. And were you coming to me?"

"Yes," returned Constance Grey; "I have only just picked up our escaped prisoners quite accidentally on the road, and I was going to bring them with me.

"Come, then, my dear companions," cried Milly, joyously, "I will turn back, and we will all go together.

The young lady quitted her brougham for a seat in the baroueche, leaving her own vehicle to follow at leisure.

The horses being in splended condition, the drive to Rose Lodge was quickly performed.

Here the four schoolfellows assembled in Milly's private boudoir, and Rose Royston detailed all the incidents that had occurred from the commencement of the vacation up to that moment.

"Oh, what a glorious triumph it is!" exclaimed Milly.

"But our flight is sure to be discovered before long, is it not?" suggested Violet, timidly; "and then——"

"What then, little timid?" laughed Milly.

"They may come after us and demand us back."

"But they must find you first, mustn't they?" asked Constance.

She paused a moment thoughtfully, and then continued:

"It strikes me, though, Milly, that Rose and Violet had better remain with you until the first alarm blows over. They would be sure to be suspected of being at my house; whilst with you they would be perfectly secure."

"With all my heart," assented Milly. "I am sure mamma will consent; and as my invitation was to follow yours, it will only make a difference of dates."

This being determined, our young heroines were hurried off to a charming apartment, to rest themselves and dress for the evening.

"Well," said Rose, as she lay back luxuriously in her chair, whilst Milly's maid brushed out her luxuriant tresses, "who would have thought yesterday morning that we should have been here at this moment?"

"Ah," echoed Violet, with a quiet sigh of happiness, "who, indeed?"

Just as these questions were being asked Theodore Westlake and his friend, who had just returned from their fruitless expedition, entered their dressing-room for the purpose of making a hasty preparation for dinner.

"I think girls—pretty ones especially—were invented expressly to torment us poor wretches!" exclaimed Theodore, peevishly, as he tugged on a patent-leather boot.

"So do I," assented Harry Targent, sympathetically; "I never fancied any girl so much as that little dark-haired gypsy and I suppose just on that account I am fated never to see her again."

(To be continued.)

"Wild Rose and Violet" was commenced in No. 646.

A TALK ABOUT THE INDIANS OF THE PLAINS.

By MAJOR SCHUYLER.

NOT long since Major Philip Schuyler gave an entertaining lecture at the Newsboys' Lodging-house, Chambers Street, New York, about the Indians of the plains. It is real personal experience, and will, we are sure, please boys everywhere:

"In the Autumn of 1877, I was sent out on a hunting-expedition—away out in the neighborhood of Laramie—hunting elk bear, and antelope; but after having got through with my hunting experience, I found myself knocked over for that year at Fort Laramie. It was the first time my little party had seen anybody to say a word to or speak to for six weeks. We had been living up in the mountains and in valleys, hunting in places where, as far as we knew, there had never been before us a single white man. We were all the time on the lookout for Indian trails, because throughout that country there were roving bands of Sioux Indians; and although they were nominally at peace with the whites, yet if they found one or two white men they were ready to lift their hair or scalp them. This Fort Laramie is situated about eighty miles north of Cheyenne, and about eight hundred miles west of the Mississippi River.

"Upon arriving at a military post I did what anybody else does—I called upon the commanding-officer of the post, and I was very much surprised to find how very kindly he received me, and that he expected me for some time. I could not understand that, exactly, but I soon found out what it was. He said that General Sheridan had written a letter to him and other commanding-officers in that neighborhood that I was hunting in that neighborhood, and if I came to the post, to do what they could for me. I felt very much obliged for this, because I learned that about seventy miles northeast of Fort Laramie was a large body of Sioux Indians encamped.

"They were under the command of Red Cloud, and I understood they were shortly to be removed to another reservation, and that a chance of any white man visiting them again in that way was very remote. So I told the officer that I would like to go and visit them. He said there would be great danger, but if I insisted he would give me a four-mule ambulance and a military escort. One morning we started early, with an escort of eight cavalrymen, well-armed, and my four-mule team and driver, all wearing our revolvers, and every cavalryman armed with revolver and carbine, and a full supply of powder.

"We journeyed that day very comfortably to a creek called Raw Hide Creek; there we camped. We corralled our mules and horses; with the wagons made a species of fort, and having two pickets—not knowing but that at any moment we might be 'jumped,' as the term is out there, by some of these roving Indians. Fortunately for us we passed the night comfortably, and the next morning started toward the Sioux encampment. We passed a river called the Niobrara, meaning the running or leaping water.

"I noticed that the sergeant closed his men around the wagon with great care, and upon inquiring why, he told me that in going down the next divide we should come across Arapahoe Indians, and that, although all the Indians were at peace with the whites, it was as well to show a certain amount of force. As we went across the stream, I noticed, as I sat next the driver—I wanted to have a chance to jump out with the rest should necessity require it—I noticed some blanketed forms of Indians in the woods, and if our force had not been as great as it was, there was some danger of our being attacked, merely for the purpose of being robbed. I noticed tepees or tents of the Arapahoe Indians. The escort then fell in the rear, because our blankets were a strong temptation to the Indians, and in that way we drove through the village. The young boys of the Indians followed rapidly after us, and made passes with their sharp knives at the thongs that bound our blankets to the wagon.

"To secure the blankets thoroughly is of first importance; for a man in that part of the world who loses his blanket is worse than homeless. We then got up the tableland on our way to what is now called Fort Robinson, then called Camp Robinson—then a temporary military station—arriving there a little after sunset, much to my delight. One or two officers came out, whom I had met as companions in arms in the army, and they endeavored to make me stay with them and make my headquarters at Camp Robinson—that was three miles from Red Cloud agency, as it is called; but I thought that was too far off from these fellows I wanted to see, so I resisted their kind invitation, and went on that night. They would not let me go, however, until I took a half-breed as an interpreter.

"After winding about in the dark some time I heard a curious drumming noise; I then saw a little flickering of light, and this drumming followed by a sort of low, monotonous chant. I didn't care to ask the half-breed what it was, because my ideas of that night were such that I did not wish to have him at all prejudiced against me. At last I stopped in front of a species of rough stockade, in front of which was a low hut which belonged to an Indian trader; one part containing a spacious counter and a species of sofa and oil-lamp, and the other part a species of dining-hall. I made what arrangements I could for the night, and after a very hasty and primitive supper I said to my half-breed, 'We will now go into the Sioux village.' He knew some of the chiefs of the village, and I preferred going in that way, because I wanted to place myself on a certain sort of equality with these Indians, and make them understand that I came among them fearless, and that I was not afraid to go with them in the night or any time.

"We started, armed with our revolvers, and after a walk through the dark of a quarter of a mile, relieved occasionally by a sort of flitting shadow that passed us occasionally—no noise, no creak of a shoe, the noiseless tread of a moccasined foot—we came to one of these tepees, a light glimmering from it.

"My guide stopped. I did exactly as he did, and I saw him stoop on the ground and draw back a flap, duck his head down and pop into a hole. When the flap fell back to its place the noise of this flap, loaded as it were with sticks to bring it back again with the wind, brought me back a little to my consciousness, and I found myself where? I was standing quite in the centre of a circle of painted savages, looking at me with their great black eyes; no light at all inside of this tepee except that which came from a very small camp-fire burning in the centre of the hut.

(To be continued.)

OFF THE MAURITIUS; Or, STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

A SEA SKETCH.

By Blue Jacket.

"WE will house the topgallant masts, Mr. Bradshaw, and make everything snug for the night. There is something brewing 'neath you dark bank of clouds which will soon make its power felt. The barometer has fallen to twenty-eight degrees, and we are too close to the Mauritius to hope to escape the cyclone——"

"Thank heaven, sir, we have a ship upon which we can depend! The *Rajah* has few equals."

And the mate walked forward to superintend the orders received from his superior.

The agile crew soon had the ship under snug canvas, and together with the officers, occupied themselves in watching the weather.

The heat was intense; not a breath of air ruffled the mirror-like surface of the ocean, which, from a deep-blue, had assumed the dark, sombre color of the dull, leaden sky.

The men panted for breath; all nature appeared hushed into one horrible, deceitful calm.

As the sun set, a fine, grayish mist covered the entire firmament, while the bank of clouds which had hung motionless along the horizon started into life, rising rapidly toward the zenith.

The huge clipper ship, with her tall, taper spars, rocked uneasily to and fro, the close-reefed topsails flapping wildly to the motion of the vessel.

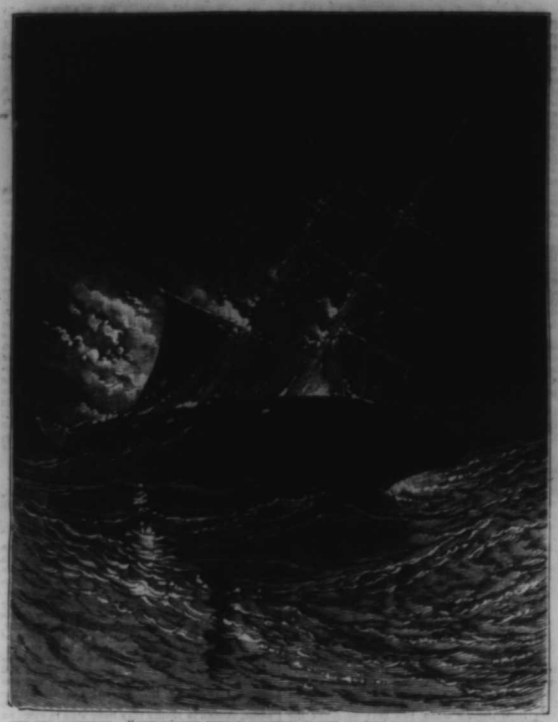
Low murmurs were heard, as if currents of air were stirring aloft. The opaqueness became more dense; the clouds appeared to settle; the sounds aloft, so uncertain, increased, while here and there the placid surface of the ocean was occasionally ruffled by a slight threat of air.

Then came the rumbling noise of distant thunder, with a whizzing and moaning through the shrouds and taut rigging of the vessel. A broad, black line swept along the expanse of water, fearful to contemplate in its rapidity, and the hurricane burst with all its accumulated force and fury upon the ship, which had been stripped for the encounter.

The mate sprang to the wheel to assist the helmsman; the gallant craft careened before the furious blast until her lee-rail was buried in the foaming waters.

A deluge of foam and spray swept upon her; the decks were afloat as she for a moment trembled, as if irresolute and shrinking; but, with an effort, the *Rajah* recovered, obeyed the helm, fell off before the gale, scudding with the rapidity of a race-horse.

The horizon to windward resembled a pall of



OFF THE MAURITIUS.—"THE FLAMES SPREAD RAPIDLY, FANNED BY THE FIERCE BREATH OF THE GALE, WHICH, BY A MERCIFUL PROVIDENCE, GAVE UNMISTAKABLE SIGNS OF BREAKING UP."

black velvet in its intenseness, serving as a background to relieve the white, curling tops of the seas. Large pattering drops of rain now mingled with the spray, the angry voice of the thunder rolled to windward, while an occasional gleam of lightning shot along the whole dark expanse of the heavens.

Bending over the cabin-table, upon which was spread a chart, the captain, with dividers and parallel ruler, was busy defining the position of the ship. His fine, sunburnt features looked haggard and pale as he glanced up from his work to listen for a moment to the sharp whistling of the gale.

Hurrying on deck, he scanned the horizon with an anxious glance, then, after a moment's hesitation, called the mate to his side.

"We must heave to, Mr. Bradshaw; we are running directly for the Mauritius, and I have no desire to be any nearer to them. We must not get on a lee shore if possible. We'll watch for a favorable opportunity, and put the wheel down."

The manœuvre was successfully accomplished, but not without shipping a tremendous sea that swept the deck fore and aft; but the *Rajah* was now lying head to the sea under a close-reefed maintopsail, forestaysail and main spencer.

At midnight the gale veered a point or so, and appeared to increase.

The lightning darted through the sky in every direction like so many fiery, hissing serpents, and the thunder, for the time being, effectually drowned the noise of the wind and sea.

The seas would occasionally strike on the fore-channels with fearful violence, making the huge ship reel and tremble from the force of the blows, as she gallantly breasted the surges.

All hands were now on deck, and, by direction of the captain, the carpenter rigged the pumps.

The ship was laboring hard—often descending with a violent plunge into the trough of the sea—threatening to divide from the concussion. An occasional sea would burst over the bows, rushing aft to the binnacle, where the captain was stationed, and the second mate had life-lines rove fore and aft, by which the sailors saved themselves from being washed overboard.

Hardy sailors as they were, their pulses quickened as they listened to the hoarse howling of the wind tearing through the rigging, the ceaseless rush of the descending rain, the washing of the water on deck, the working and clang of the pumps, mingled with the creaking and groaning of the ship's timbers, which were complaining fore and aft.

As the lightning gleamed athwart the deck, the men gazed into each other's eyes with a subdued expression, as if resigned to some awful calamity at present concealed from them.

But the stern voice of the second mate was heard rising above the tempest, bidding them to unrig the pump, which had the effect of restoring their confidence.

A succession of furious squalls now swept over the *Rajah*. The rain, in blinding, cutting, unbroken sheets, drove *horizontally* before the gale, rendering it impossible to look to windward for a moment.

The captain, silent and anxious, had taken up his post alongside the mizzenmast, clinging on to the liersil, while the mate stood by the man at the wheel, with the second mate a short distance to leeward.

A blacker cloud than usual settled over the ship, charged with electricity.

A flash of lightning that blinded for a time, followed instantaneously by a peal of thunder, so powerful as to shake the entire vessel, stretched a number of the seamen senseless on deck, wounding some and killing others.

The *Rajah* had been struck by the fatal fluid, and a strong sulphurous smell pervaded the entire ship. The bolt had struck the mizzen-topmast, darted down the side, entering the cabin, where it scattered in all directions.

The mate, together with the second mate and man at the wheel, had been rendered insensible, but quickly recovered from the shock, to find the ship wrapped in flames, while the captain, calm and apparently unmoved, remained alongside the burning spar.

The mate sprang forward to his side, gazed wonderingly into the face of his superior, revealed by wavering flames of the burning ship, and recoiled with a cry of horror.

The captain had passed to his long account. He had shaped his last course, made his final struggle against the elements, and was now before the Great Admiral who governs all things aloft.

He had been struck by lightning!

The survivors of the crew rallied from the shock, gazed aghast at the twisting tongues of flame wreathing about the mizzenmast, and the alarm which brings the blood in swift currents to a seaman's heart was now heard rising above the gale.

It was the appalling cry of "Fire!" the half-uttered shrieks of terror partially drowned by the mocking voice of the wind and waves.

TALES WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—THE NEW WAR IN SOUTH AMERICA, BETWEEN CHILI AND BOLIVIA.—GENERAL VIEW OF VALPARAISO.—SEE PAGE 158.

In an instant the swelling canvas, the dusky spars, the cordage and symmetry and fine outlines of the vessel's rig were brought out in terrible relief by the gloomy background of the sombre heavens.

Rallying under the energetic orders of the remaining officers, the men sprang to subdue the fire, working with a will, fully alive to the peril which threatened them. The voice of Mr. Bradshaw was heard above the sullen sound of the fire, exhorting them to greater efforts.

The hose was rigged, buckets mustered, blankets and sails wetted and cast upon the fire, but the confined space of the cabin, which was all aglow, the heat and smoke, drove the despairing sailors back in spite of all their efforts.

For an hour they fought against hope, but their exertions were fruitless; their ardor abated, as scorched and half-blinded they fell back, and the hours of the *Rajah* were numbered.

The flames spread rapidly, fanned by the fierce breath of the gale, which, by a merciful Providence, gave unmistakable signs of abating. Driven forward by the heat, the men, by the direction of Mr. Bradshaw, turned their attention toward launching the long-boat.

It was their only hope and refuge now, slender as it was; the men worked with an enthusiasm, as if assured that their lives would yet be saved.

Provisions and water were hastily gathered, compass, charts and instruments deposited in the stern-sheets, and the final arrangements made to desert the burning wreck.

In the meanwhile the mizzenmast had gone over the side with all its burning top-hamper, and small tongues of flame were creeping along the pitchy seams of the main deck forward of the mainmast. Frequent explosions in the hold of the vessel proved that barrels of inflammable material were bursting, adding to and feeding the fire.

The mate as well as all hands realized that they were standing over a raging volcano, and he watched anxiously for a favorable opportunity to launch the boat.

The mainmast was now wreathed in flames; the canvas, shrouds and gear were one sheet of flame, streaming up and borne aloft, while a shower of sparks trailed far astern.

The entire mass was tottering, wavering to and fro in its step, and the eyes of the seamen clustered on the topgallant forecastle watched each movement with a terrible fascination. A sudden gust of wind struck the spar; it surged heavily to one side, wavered for a moment, then fell with a crash which echoed far across the agitated waters.

A vast column of fire was vomited forth, shooting on high, a shower of sparks, and a dense cloud of smoke followed, and, as if actuated beyond impulse, the seamen rushed to the boat, launched it to leeward, at the same time casting off from the fiery hull.

Bradshaw did not attempt to restrain the men; the deck-beams were giving away, the entire structure caving in, and he knew full well that the time had come when they must bid adieu to the *Rajah*, and trust to the frail protection of the long-boat.

The sea had gone down as quickly as it had risen, and the tropical gale, violent in its short-lived wrath, was rapidly subsiding. The rain had ceased, the moon burst through the clouds, which gradually rolled to leeward, and as daylight dawned the men were enabled to use the oars.

They had watched until the last moment the burning hull, the wreck of the foremast, as it in turn fell over the side.

They listened to the sharp hiss of the flames as the water lapped over the blazing bulwarks, and gazed in awe upon the awful spectacle of the ocean closing after the fiery remains of a once gallant ship. It was the tomb of the captain. No effort had been made to rescue the body—the living could not encumber themselves with the dead.

Until daylight dawned, the boat lay by in hopes some passing vessel, attracted by the flames, might bear down upon them.

The mate, with a careful glance, swept the horizon with a glass, but no sail was in sight. A cry of joy escaped him, however, and a ray of hope darted across his breast as he pointed out the loom of land. It was the volcanic mountains of the Isle of France, which news elicited a round of applause from the crew. With renewed vigor they gave way, urging the heavy boat rapidly through the water, and before night came on the welcome outline of the island was in plain sight.

At a late hour the next day the boat entered the harbor of Port Louis, where the mate sought out the American Consul, to whom he related his tale of suffering and danger.

The seamen were taken in charge by the Government official, who furnished them situations on board various crafts, until the crew of the *Rajah* were scattered to the four winds of heaven, in all probability never to meet again.

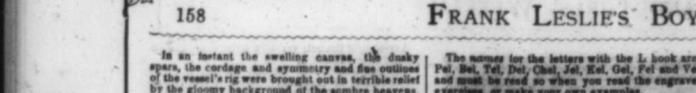
As for Bradshaw and the second mate, they in turn returned to the United States, where one obtained command of a ship, and the other is steadily rising in his profession.

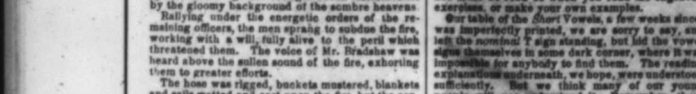
EASY LESSONS IN PHONOGRAPHY, OR SHORT-HAND.

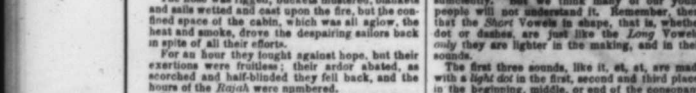
L HOOK.

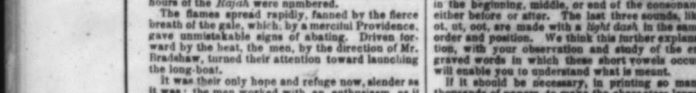
THE L hook, like the R hook of last week, is a great saving in hundreds of words; while the *R* hook is written on the left-hand side of the letter, the *L* hook is made on the opposite, or right-hand side. At first you will have trouble in making up your mind which is which, but remember, *R* left, L right.

Copy the following examples:









The names for the letters with the L hook are: Pel, Bel, Tel, Del, Chel, Jel, Kel, Gel, Fel and Vel, and must be read so when you read the engraved exercises, or make your own examples.

Our table of the short vowels, a few weeks since, was imperfectly printed, we are sorry to say, and left the *nominal* ? sign standing, but did the vowel signs themselves in some dark corner, where it was impossible for anybody to find them. The reading explanations are faulty, we hope, of were understood sufficiently. But we think many of our young people will not understand it. Remember, then, that the *Short* Vowels in shape, that is, whether dot or dashes, are just like the *Long* Vowels, only they are lighter in the making, and in their sounds.

The first three sounds, like it, et, at, are made with a *light dot* in the first, second and third place, in the beginning, middle, or end of the consonant, either before or after. The last three sounds, like ot, ut, oot, are made with a *light dash* in the same order and position. We think this further explanation, with your observation and study of the engraved words in which these short vowels occur, will enable you to understand what is meant.

If it should be necessary, in printing so many thousands of papers, to make the characters larger than usual, to avoid omissions, or blurring, it will be done.

In the above examples, and as many more as you may be able to make up from your own knowledge or reading, do not imagine that the simple hook itself stands for the L or R, without being joined to a consonant letter. Either, standing alone, must be a full-length L or R.

All these double letters are made without taking off the pen or pencil—that is, you commence with the hook, not by making the straight letter first, and the hook after, as some beginners think. These two principles of the hooks are very important. Take all the straight letters and apply them; also in words either of one or more syllables.

The exceptions in writing the R hook on f, v, th, fh, do not occur with the L hook. But you will notice, at the end of the cut, where the R hook is joined, the letters m and n are made heavy, otherwise the hook would be the sign of w, joined. So, for distinction, the letters are made heavy when the hook for r is added.

Instead of calling them em and nr, the letters for which these signs stand, they are named Mer, Ner. The sign for mp also stands for mb, and is called Emp or Emb, as it is usedeior either, as in bomb, lamp.

Write—Plate, plat, plot, please, pledge (Pel-e-Jay), plague (Pel-a-Gay), played, plum, pleasure (Pel-e-Zher), tattle, tickle, tuggle, trouble (Ter-u-Bel), trifle (Ter-i-Fel).

In like manner pick out and write all the words you can in this column that can be written with the vowels and the diphthongs, and the L and R hook (one or both), and repeat your practice on the value of the sounds, until you shall have but very little trouble when you see or speak the words, to apply the right vowel, in the right place, to the right consonant.

The last lesson was about the R hook. This lesson is a treatment of both the R and L hook in connection with the S sign (Ses), and with examples in the long and short vowels.

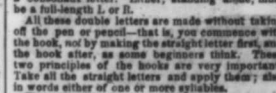
An *S* can be added to an R hook or an L hook, by completing the circle from where the hook on the left side commences, and by writing the circle S within the L hook. The fact that the S sign is placed on the left hand side of a straight letter shows that it is a combination of S and R. It placed on the *right* it simply gives the addition of an S, but if written between the L hook and the stem or straight sign, it adds el. In this way we commence the word. Taking the circular Alphabet, and adding the S and R hook, we have Sper, Ster, Scher, Sker, Sger, Sber, Sder, Sjer; or, beitar, les-Per, les-Ter, les-Cher, les-Ker, les-Ger, les-Ber, les-Der, les-Jer.

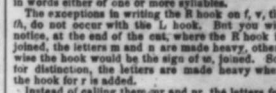
Adding the S and L hook, we have les-Pel, les-Tel, les-Chel, les-Kel, les-Gel, les-Bel, les-Del, les-Jel.

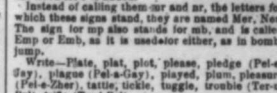
Both may be added also to the irregular letters F, V, lth, Tth, which, for the sake of the *R* hook, have to be inverted, and accommodate themselves to the hook.

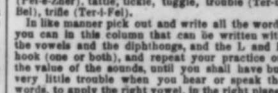
The use of this combination for adding an S and an R, or an L, is one more great step toward the abbreviation necessary in following speech.

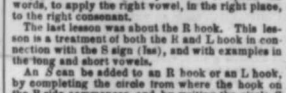
These savings will grow as we proceed. Copy and sound the following:

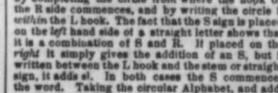












In the above, you will notice, if the vowel comes *before* the Per list—that is, the straight letter with the hook, the S is read first, then the vowel, then the Per, Ber, etc. If the vowel *follows* the straight stem, the S (les) is read first, then the Per sign, then the vowel, as in Supper, Sabre, Stroke and Sprawl.

In making the conjunction, les-Per, etc., do not make the Per first, and finish the circle afterward. Make the les first, commencing at right angles to the straight letter, so that it will not be necessary to go completely round the circle, as when made alone, for a part of the straight letter forms a part of the circle.

When the combination occurs in the middle of a word, as in *Express*, above, the R hook is made plainly and perfectly, not like the S and R beginning a word.

In some cases you will see that the R hook, and the L hook joined with the circle S sign, cannot be made perfect. See *prescribe* and *gospel*, above.

After Tee and Dee with les between them, and the Ker, Ger, etc., the latter are written on the right, where the les leaves off, so as to distinguish clearly the form with, and without an R hook. See *discourse* and *disagree*, above.

(To be continued.)

A PERPLEXED DEACON.

WHEN Governor Gerry managed Massachusetts a country deacon happened to catch a fine salmon, and knowing that the governor had particular liking for that sort of fish, he determined to present it to him. So the salmon was carefully packed, and the deacon, in the absence of railroads, started in his wagon for Boston. On the journey he stopped to dine, and telling at the table his errand to a stranger, the fish, a cod, accidentally took the salmon's place.

The unconscious deacon went on to the governor's house, and after announcing his gift, the two worthies opened the box and discovered the flavorous codfish. Mortified, the poor deacon started for home with his codfish, and stopping for a lunch at his dining-place, the wag secretly removed the codfish and replaced the salmon. When he reached home the deacon accordingly told his story to an incredulous wife, who had herself packed the salmon; they opened the box together. The deacon stared. "Well, you are a pretty good salmon when you are in the country," said he, "but when you are in Boston you are a miserable codfish."

Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

THE NEW WAR IN SOUTH AMERICA.

AS the boys of America probably well know, the large peninsula that we call South America is occupied with a number of small republics and the large empire of Brazil. South America was originally settled by Spaniards, as was also Mexico, Central America, and some of the southern portions of North America. Spanish domination in South America was a series of tyrannies and exactions, until portion after portion threw off the yoke of Spain and assumed independence. With the exception of Brazil, which became an empire, and the three small states known as British Guiana, the French Guiana, which were colonized by and still belong to England, Holland and France, all the South American States have become republics in name, though in reality they have little in common with a true republican form of government as we know it in the United States.

On an average of about once a year there is a war among these republics. Sometimes it is a civil war, resulting in the forcible expulsion of one administration and the establishment of another, in which case the officers of the defeated administration are generally shot, and sometimes it is a quarrel between neighboring States about some trivial matter which could easily be settled should cooler counsels prevail.

The latest South American war, and one now in progress, is between the adjacent republics of Chili and Bolivia. The former is said to be the best-governed and most prosperous of the South American republics. It lies on the west coast, and is bounded on the north by Bolivia, on the east by the Andes Mountains, and on the south and west by the Pacific Ocean. Chili claims that portion of Patagonia west of the Andes and south of latitude 45deg. 30min., but its jurisdiction over that portion is merely nominal. Its area, exclusive of the Patagonia portion, is about 133,000 square miles, and including it, about 250,000 square miles.

Chili has a large seaport, Valparaiso, which is the most important city on the whole Pacific coast. The capital is Santiago. The population of Chili is about 2,000,000, not including about 75,000 of the aboriginal Indians, who have succeeded in maintaining their independence, notwithstanding a war of extermination has been waged against them for a century and a half. The greater part of the inhabitants of Chili are of mixed blood, and call themselves Chilenos.

Bolivia is a much larger State than Chili, comprising an area of 677,288-square miles; but with all this, the population is not as great as that of Chili by nearly 200,000. The members of the aboriginal tribes are much more numerous than the whites, being five to one in some places, and in others as many as nine to one.

The most of these are civilized and Christianized, but there are about 250,000 still in a savage state. Taking the whole population of Bolivia, about one-quarter are white and the remaining three-quarters belong to the aboriginal tribes and their mixed-blood descendants.

Bolivia was formerly called the Presidency of Charcas, then Upper Peru, and formed, in 1767, a part of Buenos Ayres. It was erected into an independent State in August, 1825. Since then there have been constant revolutions, and of the many presidents of the country the majority have been killed.

In 1866 Bolivia joined in the alliance between Peru, Ecuador and Chili against Spain, which had declared war against Chili. Previous to the alliance there had been continual disputes between the two republics as to the boundary line. Chili claimed north to the twenty-third parallel, and Bolivia south to the twenty-sixth. These disputes resulted in frequent collisions between the forces of the two nations.

In 1866 a treaty was signed, giving Chili to twenty-five degrees, and Bolivia to twenty-three degrees. The two intervening degrees were to be under the joint occupancy of both nations, with an equal share of the proceeds of the nitrate and guano mines. In this neutral space there were already settled a number of Chilian citizens, who, not desiring to change their allegiance and become Bolivian subjects, were provided for in the treaty, which declared that their property in this locality should not be taxed by Bolivia. This property consisted in a great degree of nitrate deposits, which being exported, were a source of income to these Chilians, and a company was formed to work them called the Antofagasta Company.

But this arrangement did not work harmoniously. Differences arose and threatened to cause trouble. In 1874 a new treaty was signed, fixing the boundary-line at the twenty-fourth parallel. The Chilian Government had already granted a charter to the Antofagasta Company. Most of its capital was subscribed by residents from Santiago, and an agreement was made that no export duty should be laid on the nitrate for twenty-five years. But a few months after the Bolivian Congress, disregarding this agreement, levied a tax of ten cents a quintal on all nitrate exported from Antofagasta and the other parts in the disputed territory.

This tax, which amounted to some $90,000, the company refused to pay, and when the customs officer came to arrest the officer of the company, they took refuge on a Chilian vessel that chanced to be in the bay. This produced war. Two Chilian ironclads—the *O'Higgins* and *Cochrane*—were sent to Antofagasta, and on February 13th the commodore of the *Cochrane* landed and took possession of the city. The Chilian flag was hoisted everywhere.

The *Chilian Times* of February 15th gives the following account of the beginning of the difficulty:

"Although at the present time we are most probably really at war with Bolivia, the Government has maintained a reserve on the subject rather more than prudential, and, for all we know officially to the contrary, the two countries might be on the best of terms. We hereby, however, let it be known that a telegram was received from Señor Fidela, our Minister at La Paz, reporting that the Bolivian Government had suspended the law imposing an export tax on nitrate, in deference to Chili's urgent demands, which had rescinded the contract celebrated with the Antofagasta Company. That is, it had renounced a claim for $100,000 and confiscated property worth $4,000,000. This shameless act of bad faith and spoliation naturally created a storm of indignation in the hearts of all classes, and public opinion was so decidedly in favor of maintaining Chili's rights by force of arms, if necessary, that the Government could not refuse the charge, even if so inclined. On Wednesday, the 17th—the anniversary of the battle of Chacabuco—a fete dear to the Chilian people—an immense gathering was held in the Intendencia Square, to manifest the public desire for energetic measures; and we subsequently ascertain that on the evening of the same day the following telegraphic dispatch was sent to the Intendente of Santiago, signed by the Minister of the interior:

"'The Government of Bolivia, disregarding our remonstrances, has decreed the confiscation of the property of our citizens, taking possession of the nitrate deposits, without deigning any explanation whatever.'

"The Government of Chili has recalled its minister, and the national troops are already on the way to occupy Antofagasta and other points that may be considered advisable. Since then there has been an incessant movement in naval and military circles, and judging from appearances, the Government is determined to act with energy and determination. We do not believe that the conflict will be very great, as Bolivia is unable to offer any serious resistance, either by land or sea; and topographically, as well as in population, that coast is more Chilian than Bolivian.

"Some appreciation is entertained in certain quarters that Peru will interfere; but it may well be doubted whether that country has not as much as it can do at present to keep its own house in order. At any rate, the only step hitherto taken by Peru has been to offer its services as mediator, which offer was civilly but firmly declined, and the stories circulated a week or two back regarding the presence of Peruvian iron-clads in Antofagasta have turned out to be destitute of foundation.

"Bolivia's conduct has been marked on this occasion with such a cynical disregard of common honesty that, combined with her previous violation of the treaties celebrated, the Chilian Government may well be said to be refusing to enter into any future arrangement regarding the territory in dispute, and in insisting on retaining possession of it as an integral part of the national territory, after it shall once have been assumed. Any loss that may befall Bolivia by such an act will be thoroughly merited as a penalty for her trickery and dishonesty."

The territory now in dispute is seventy miles wide and reaching from the ocean to the Andes. It is rich in deposits of guano, saltpeter and copper. Some silver is also found. The ease with which Antofagasta was taken was due to the fact that the greater part of the inhabitants there were Chilians and the remote position of the interior towns, so that no force could be thrown in to defend the city.

The inhabitants of the disputed territory, between 23 deg. and 24 deg., number 8,507, 6,554 of them being Chilians, and only 1,226 Bolivians. There are 191 Peruvians, 726 Argentines, and the remainder are divided among a dozen different nationalities. Bolivia has, according to the most trustworthy statistics, 2,500,000 inhabitants, and Chili 2,100,000. Bolivia has no fleet at all—not having five to spare while Chili has two ironclads and several wooden corvettes. It may be doubtful if the possession so easily obtained will be as easily retained.

Rumors to-day say the Bolivian army, numbering upward of five thousand, are on the march to the seaboard, and will soon reach the seat of war. Chili has already thrown nearly a thousand men into Antofagasta, and they are busily employed making preparations to defend the place. The other regiments of regular soldiers are being newly equipped, and will be sent forward as soon as possible.

The two nations are nearly equally matched in numbers, but Chili has far the greater advantage for having her forces ready at command to be transported in a few days, without long weeks of travel. It is uncertain yet what attitude Peru will assume. If she forms an alliance with Bolivia, Chili will scarcely be able to maintain the stand she has taken, if Peru remained neutral, and be able to do so. These people move slowly, and nothing more than rumors will be in circulation for some days, and perhaps weeks.

To add to the distress that war inevitably brings, it is reported to exist in Bolivia.

A correspondent of the Callao *South Pacific Times*, writing from Oruro, Bolivia, February 10th, says that the state of the country is most distressing. "Starvation is staring every one in the face. Everywhere you go you stumble on dead bodies, men, women and children. On the coast you appear to think that Cochabamba is the only place where scarcity exists, which is quite a mistake. Here about it is quite as bad. The most part of the Indians are living on echanos, and in many instances persons have been found dead while searching for this plant. To increase the famine, most crops in this neighborhood have been destroyed by frost and the drought, particularly the potato crops, and I am afraid this year will be worse than the last. In the valleys, in parts, crops are in a fair state, but as not one-quarter the amount has been planted of former years, all seeds must be scarce."

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THE ROUND TABLE.

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1. Latin, Greek—LoG, ArmoR, TiE, InvitE, NooK. 2. EdwIn, DIana, WAgus, InspI, NAsty. 3. Inn-O-cent. 4. Menace. 5. M / Hen; Honor; Menaces; No cod; Red; S. 6. Wise B; Image; Sabre; Egret; Beds.

7.—		
	A	Y
S	I L L	Y
S A L I N		Y
S	L E N	K
I	N	K

8. Swine, Wine, Win, In, I. 9. A Needle. 10. Pet-u(yew)-lance.

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1.—L. V. Hart, Box 182, Kewanee, Ill.
2.—W. S. Flinn, 141 Clinton Street, Cincinnati, O.
3.—C. A. Lawton, St. Louis, Mo.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1.—TRANSPOSITION.

My letters four there is no doubt
We cannot hope to be without;
For while in this world we are placed
We must of pain and sorrow taste.
My letters change, a brilliant scene
On Royal Ascot's lawn so green,
Where willing swains to ladies fair
Or kid gloves lose full many a pair.
Once more transpose—pray understand—
I now describe a piece of land,
Where by your industry you may
A little harvest reap some day.

2.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

Five hundred; meadow grass; treacherous; good advice; troubled; a Spanish chief; the beginning of evil.

3.—CHARADE.

While hunting in a jungle vast
A second's first I carelessness passed;
Out sprang my second with a yell,
But soon in death the feline fell.

4.—ENIGMA.

Though not a mighty potentate, I represent distinction great.
I'm sent about from place to place, and carry scars upon my body;
I go abroad, I come to town, and sometimes stationed upside down.
Ill used I am, it must be said, for frequently they punch my head.
It isn't right you go to serve, for thumps and blows I don't deserve.
For ever since I came in force, I've been a profit, not a loss.

5.—SQUARE WORDS.

To clear out; a nymph; evergreens; a famous mountain; an optical illusion; false diamonds.

6.—CHARADE.

In the nursery rhyme an old woman, we're told,
Drove sow first to the town so as to be sold;
When she lost it, second first, second first, she did cry,
My man'kin whole you will for a fee spy.

7.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

Primals in Spring, with watchful care,
Finals will visit when time she can spare;
Though weary, controls she must often tread,
Yet eggs she thinks as good at least as bread.

Last of the works from the Creator's hand;
Belonging to the sheep, I think 'twill stand;
A name an Irish lad will sometimes bear;
Obsolete word that now we well can spare;
Homes without hands that we see everywhere.

8.—SQUARE WORDS.

An English title; a nautical term; a loud noise; a musical instrument.

9.—CHARADE.

My first is a biped unfledged and unfeathered;
My next is a biped that is very well feathered;
My whole to a different kingdom will belong,
And if you call it a plant, you will not be wrong.

10.—CENTRAL DELETION.

Delete a piece of furniture you know,
And what oft appears in our paper 'twill show;
Delete what in big type is displayed to alarm,
And get a nice bird that will do us no harm;
Delete a short leap, or a limit to land,
And get a sealed writing that 'gainst you will stand;
Delete a fabric you always wear,
And get what causes builders care.

FUN FOR THE BOYS.

NOW THEY call Harriet Hosmer a "woman inventor." Don't believe a word of it. Harriet has never intented a woman. Tell that to the Hoomernites.

A LITTLE girl of three, wanting to help set the table, was given an article to carry, but doubt was expressed as to her ability to reach high enough to place it on the table. By standing on tiptoe it was done, and running to her mother, she cried out: "I did it, mamma; but I had to stand on my hind legs."

WHEN may a man be said to breakfast before he gets up without appeasing his appetite? When he takes a roll in bed, of course.

THE pumpkin crop in Missouri was large this year, and the St. Louis girls find the fruit just the thing to darn their stockings over. A St. Louis poet might well thus write of the pumpkin:

It is good to darn stockings,
And darned good for pies.

A FELLOW wrote to a bookseller as follows: "Dere sir, I never hev got a book called Daniel Webster on a bridge, please send me a copyy by Pyser's express c o d—I want to get it to-morrer if i kin, caus my spelin teacher says I oughter hev it."

WELL ANSWERED.

"Have you ever been in prison?" asked a lawyer of a witness, whom he was disposed to badger and bully, as the profession are apt to do.

"Yes, sir."

"When?"

"In 1863."

"Where?"

"In Andersonville."

There was a momentary pause for breath, and then a round of applause that shook the court-room. The lawyer felt all the rest of the day as if an inch and a half hose attached to a street-hydrant were playing to the tune of the "Rogue's March" up and down his spinal column.

THE NEW STYLE.—*Brown* (to friend in bath) "Come and dine with us to-morrow, Jack?" *Jack:* "All right! Dress, of course?" *Brown:* "Oh, no; no ceremony, you know. Come just as you are."

THE NEXT invention Edison is to attempt is a machine that will keep a woman's eye closed during prayer-time in church when a friend in the pew in front has on a new frock.

A MOST worthy man, unaccustomed to public speaking, being suddenly called upon to address a Sunday-school, rose to his feet, and after vainly struggling for utterance, at last hoarsely muttered, "Dear children, don't ever play with powder."

AN Irish car-driver having driven a gentleman a long stage during a storm of rain, the gentleman said: "Paddy, are you not very wet?" "Arrah! I don't care about being wet, but plase yer honor, I'm very dry."

SCHOOLMISTRESS.—"Johnny, I'm ashamed of you! When I was your age I could read as well as I can now." "Aw, but you'd a different teacher to what we've got."

A WIFE will scarcely ever notice whether her husband has his hair cut or not, but let him go home with a strange hairpin sticking to his overcoat and she'll see it before he reaches the gate.

WHEN you send a paper to a young lady out a small item out, no matter what. This insures the office the sale of another paper. She has got to see what it was if it takes a week to find out.

"FATHER," said a young man, who thought his guardian supplied him rather sparingly with pocket-money, "is there a picture on the back of the ten-dollar greenback?" "Of course there is, you stupid fellow. Why do you ask?" "Because it is so long since I saw one."

A YOUNG lady, after passing the Cambridge local examination, suddenly broke off her engagement with her sweetheart. A friend expostulated with her, but she replied, "I must merely say that his views on the theosophic doctrine of cosmogony are loose, and you must at once understand how impossible it is for any true woman to risk her happiness on such a person."

A COUNTRY paper did not half finish a story about trout in a gentleman's trout-pond saving the life of a little girl who was accustomed to feed them, and who had accidentally fallen into the pond, by forming themselves into a solid body and supporting her in the water. It appears there are later advices about it. The trout not only raised her to the surface, but they floated her ashore, and after which they took her on their shoulders and carried her up to the house, over half a mile, across fields, being compelled to take down several fences in order to do it. When the father of the little girl came to the door in answer to the bell (rung by one of the trout), he discovered a lot of trout rolling the child on an old salt-barrel, to get the water out of her. When she was finally resuscitated the trout united in giving three cheers, and declining to step into the house and "take suthin'," they trotted back to the pond.

COULDN'T SCIT THEM.—An English officer sent on a special mission by the War Office, included in his accounts an item of one shilling for "porter." The War Office sent him a formidable letter by return of post to inform him that the government did not pay for his beer. He explained that the shilling was for the man who carried his luggage, and then received another note advising him that he should have charged for "porterage." When he made up his accounts, the official charged one shilling and sixpence for "cabbage," considering that that was the proper way to set down a charge for cab hire, but he promptly received another wigging for making unauthorized investments in vegetables.

AT a recent masquerade in Bridgeport, Connecticut, a young lady appeared as "The Amazon," dressed in "a green velvet riding-habit." We suppose it was all right, but somehow or other all the high-art pictures of "The Amazon" we ever saw represents the lady as though she had just got out of the bath and was looking for a towel.

OH, dear; I meant to mend your glove," said Mrs. Jones, as Mr. Jones drew on a glove without any end to the fingers, on a cold morning. And Jones, who had not recovered from the lodge-meeting the night before, said, "I accept the 'mendment."

"HABIT," is hard to overcome. If you take off the first letter, it does not change "abit." If you take off another, you still have a "bit" left. If you take off still another, the whole of "it" remains. If you take another, it is not "t" totally used up. All of which shows that, if you wish to be rid of a "habit," you must throw it off altogether.

A WISE MAN'S EXPERIENCE.

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No song of a time that shook the earth
With the nation's throe at a nation's birth;
But the song of a brave man, free from fear
As Sheridan's self or Paul Revere;
Who risked what they risked—free from strife
And its promise of glorious pay—his life.

The peaceful valley has waked and stirred,
And the answering echoes of life are heard;
The dew still clings to the trees and grass,
And the earlier toilers smiling pass,
As they glance aside at the white-walled homes,
Or up the valley where merrily comes
The brook that sparkles in diamond rills
As the sun comes over the Hampshire hills.

What was it that passed like an ominous breath?
Like a shiver of fear, or a touch of death?
What was it? The valley is peaceful still,
And the leaves are afire on the top of the hill;
It was not a sound, nor a thing of sense—
But a pain, like a pang in the short suspense
That wraps the being of those who see
At their feet the gulf of eternity.

The air of the valley has felt the chill;
The workers pause at the door of the mill;
The housewife, keen to the shivering air,
Arrests her foot on the cottage stair,
Instinctive taught by the mother-love,
And thinks of the sleeping ones above.

Why stare the listeners? Why does the course
Of the mill-stream widen? Is it a horse—
"Hark to the sound of his hoofs," they say—
That gallops so wildly Williamsburg way?
God! what was that, like a human shriek,
From the winding valley? Will nobody speak?
Will nobody answer those women who cry
As the awful warnings thunder by?

Whence come they? Listen! And now they hear
The sounds of the galloping horse-hoofs near;
They watch the trend of the vale, and see
The rider, who thunders so menacingly,
With waving arms and warning scream
To the home-filled banks of the valley stream.
He draws no rein, but he shakes the street
With a shout and the ring of the galloping feet,
And this the cry that he flings to the wind:
"To the hills, for your lives! The flood is behind!"

He cries and is gone: but they know the worst—
The treacherous Williamsburg dam has burst!
The basin that nourished their happy homes
Is changed to a demon.—It comes! It comes!
A monster in aspect, with shaggy front
Of shattered dwellings to take the brunt
Of the dwellings they shatter. White-maned and hoarse,
The merciless terror fills the course
Of the narrow valley, and rushing raves
With death on the first of its hissing waves,
Till cottage and street and crowded mill
Are crumbled and crushed. But onward still,
In front of the roaring flood is heard,
The galloping horse and the warning word.
Thank God that the brave man's life is spared!
From Williamsburg town he nobly dared
To race with the flood and to take the road
In front of the terrible swath it mowed.
For miles it thundered and crashed behind,
But he looked ahead with a steadfast mind;
"They must be warned!" was all he said,
As away on his terrible ride he sped.

When heroes are called for, bring the crown
To this Yankee rider; send him down
On the stream of time with the Curtius old:
His deed, as the Roman's, was brave and bold,
And the tale can as noble a thrill awake,
For he offered his life for the people's sake.

THE RIDE OF COLLINS GRAVES.—AN INCIDENT OF THE FLOOD IN MASSACHUSETTS.—COLLINS GRAVES SPREADING THE ALARM.

OYSTERS IN CHINA.

LIKE so many other peculiar things in the Celestial Empire, the Chinese system of oyster culture differs widely from that of Europe or America. In the southern parts of China "collectors" of bamboo are placed in the oyster-beds, much after the same fashion as the elaborate tiles and "hives" employed in France. These bamboo oyster-catchers, however, are prepared in a curious manner. The canes are exposed for about two months to the rays of the sun, and then placed for the same period in salt-water, after which they are again dried for several days. Notches are then cut in the canes, into which empty oyster-shells are fixed, and thus prepared, they are driven into the seashore between high and low water-mark, and left standing to catch the young oyster spat. Those localities are considered the best where the rise and fall of the tide are the greatest, so that the bivalves may be alternately covered by the flood and exposed to the air on ebb-tide. A large trade is carried on by these collectors, and successful oyster-culturists are known to have amassed considerable fortunes. The young oysters seem to develop very rapidly, and are ready for the market when two years old. Large quantities of oysters are dried instead of being eaten in a fresh state. For this purpose they are taken from the shells, simply plunged into boiling water, and removed at once, after which they are exposed to the rays of the sun till every particle of moisture has evaporated. They will keep for a considerable length of time in this state. The finest and fattest oysters, bred and fattened on the bamboo "cuich," are selected for preparation after this method, those taken from the natural bed being inferior in quality, and not sufficiently fat to endure the operation.

SCIENCE makes wise men wiser, and fools greater fools than before.

ABSOLUTELY latest from Venice: Toitsoun-tan has put to death Mullah Yoosoof Jenaisigaula; and Mr. Girseff, of Petropaulovski, has reached Kashgar by way of Utch Tourfan and Aksu. This gentleman brings the sad news that the Doungans of Djinoto and Takeanza have murdered thirty Chinese.